A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the

Nominal and Real Trinitarians.

Non Partûm Studiis agimur, ſed ſumſimus arma
Conſiliis inimica tuis, Diſcordia vecors.

Printed in the Year 1695.

Of the Nominal, and Real TRINITARIANS.

The Diſtinction of Trinitarians, *into* Nominals *and* Realiſts; *and the Deſign of theſe Sheets.*

IT will eaſily appear, to all that have ſeen the late Prints between the Trinitarians and Unitarians; That the Queſtions controverted between us, are managed here, *on another Foot* as they ſpeak, in *another* Method, and by *different* Arguments, than in Foreign parts, or by the Latin Writers. Among other remarks that we have made and urged, the *Engliſh Unitarians* ſhow; That their Oppoſers do indeed all go under the common name of *Trinitarians*, but are (in truth) a great many ſeveral and contrary Sects. They all caſt up their Caps, and cry, *Trinity, Trinity:* But the Ideas they have of the *Trinity*, and conſequently their *Faiths* concerning this (pretended) Myſtery, are ſo many and ſo contrary; that they are leſs one Party among themſelves, than the far more Learned, and far greater Number of them (I mean hereby, the Nominal Trinitarians) are one Party with Us. As much as the Socinians are clamour'd on, for (abominable, intolerable) Hereticks; there is nothing more certain than that the Nominal Trinitarians, who are truly and properly *the Church*, and who are by much the Majority of Chriſtians, are altogether in the ſame Sentiments concerning Almighty GOD, and the Perſon of our Saviour; that we are.

This is one of the Points that I ſhall inſiſt on, and evince in theſe Sheets: but I ſhall argue divers other Matters, theſe two eſpecially. That the ſeveral Sects of *Real Trinitarians* are guilty of a manifeſt Tritheiſm; their Doctrine (neceſſarily and immediately) infers three Gods: and that the *Nominal Trinitarians* have cauſleſly innovated *the Language* of the Holy Scripture, and of the (Primitive) Church, concerning GOD, and the Perſon of the Lord Chriſt. I ſaid, *in the Language* of Scripture, and of the

antient Church; for they have retained the Primitive and true *Doctrine*, only they have not kept to *the Form of ſound Words*. I will ſpeak, firſt, of (our Brethren) the *Nominal Trinitarians*; then of the Tritheiſtick Tribes, or *Realiſts*.

Of the Nominal Trinitarians; that theſe are the Church.

THE firſt obſervation to be made on *the Nominals*, is; that theſe are *the Church*; which I prove by two (inconteſtable) Arguments.

1. Their Doctrine has been eſpouſed by *a General Council*. The Council aſſembled at the *Lateran*, in the Year 1215, eſtabliſhed (in the moſt ample manner, and moſt expreſs Terms) the Doctrine of the School-Divines or *Nominal Trinitarians*; and condemns, in the Perſon and Writings of *Abbat Joachim*, the Doctrine of the *Real Trinitarians*, as *Heretical* and *Mad*; I uſe the very words of the 2*d* Canon of that Council. To this Argument, I muſt note two things.

Firſt, This Council was more truly *General*, than almoſt any of the Councils that are ſo called. Here were preſent 1200 Fathers; the Ambaſſadours of the Emperour of *Conſtantinople*, the King of the *Romans*, the Kings of *France*, *England*, *Arragon*, *Hungary*, *Jeruſalem*, *Cyprus*, and divers others: Here alſo were the five Patriarchs, (partly in Perſon, partly by their Legats) *the Roman*, *Conſtantinopolitan*, he of *Jeruſalem*, the *Antiochian* and *Alexandrian*; whoſe Preſence (by themſelves or their Legats) is ſuppoſed neceſſary towards conſtituting an Oecumenical (or General) Council.

Secondly, Divines and Canoniſts do not give the name of *Hereſy* to any Doctrine, becauſe 'tis rejected by a great number of *Learned Men*, or by *a National Council*: but they reckon it Hereſy, if it has been cenſur'd by *a General Council*, which repreſents *the Univerſal Church*. Be the miſtake never ſo great, let it have been condemned by never ſo many Writers; whether Fathers or Moderns, or both: 'tis only Error, 'tis not Hereſy, unleſs it has been Anathematiz'd by the Catholick (or Univerſal) Church; and the Catholick Church is never underſtood to ſpeak, but by a General Council; which for that reaſon is called *the Church Repreſentative*.

Briefly, Hereſy and the Faith can be declared, but *only by a General Council*; the General Council at the Lateran (in *Rome*) has avowed the Doctrine of the *Nominal Trinitarians*, and Anathematiz'd the Hypotheſis and Explication of the *Real Trinitarians*: therefore, ſay I, the former are the Church; the latter are Hereticks. I am amazed, when I hear

hear ſome *Real Trinitarians* ſay in their Books; That the Doctrine of the *Nominals* never had any other publick Authority, but the Creed and 2*d* Canon of the Council of *Lateran:* for what other *equal* Authority thereto can it have; is not a General Council the higheſt Court of the Church? Her Canons declare the *Faith*, her Anathemas *Hereſy*. And what other Council ever was ſo General as this; in which were aſſembled, the Emperour, and Kings of the Eaſt and Weſt, the Latin and Greek Churches, 1200 Fathers; and what eſpecially makes a General Council, the five Patriarchs of Chriſtendom.

What will the *Realiſts* ſay here; that this was *a Popiſh Council?* Firſt, it would be News indeed, that the Roman Catholicks are not Orthodox, in the Queſtions concerning the *Trinity*, and the *Incarnation*. It has ever been granted to them, both by the *Lutherans*, *Calviniſts*, and Church of *England*, that they are ſound in Fundamentals; in the Doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Satisfaction, and ſuch like: their Error conſiſts, in the Additions they have made to the Fundamentals; and namely, by their Doctrines of Indulgences, Tranſubſtantiation, Worſhip and Invocation of Images and Saints, and the reſt. And is the Greek Church alſo Heretical in the Doctrine of the Trinity? for in this Council, the Greek Emperour and Church were repreſented, as well as the Latin Church: nay, of the five Patriarchs here preſent, four of them belong to the Orient, or Greek Church. When the Realiſts have turned themſelves all ways, they will find themſelves held, and even bound by the Authority of this Council; which is too Great and Venerable to be (openly, or directly) diſclaimed.

'Tis objected to this Council, by Mr. *Spanheim*, the preſent (Learned) Profeſſor at *Leyden*; that they aſſented to, and publiſhed 70 Canons in 20 days Time; and that the Canons were not framed by the Fathers, but by the Pope. Theſe are frivolous Exceptions, unworthy of ſo Learned an Hiſtorian: for 'tis not at all to the purpoſe, who contrived theſe Canons; ſeeing they were approved, aſſented to, and publiſhed by the Council. Canons are oftimes compoſed by ſome particular Father in a Council; ſometimes by a Committee of the Council, ſometimes (as in the preſent Caſe) by the Preſident: but by whomſoever they are drawn up, they are not the Canons of that Perſon or Perſons; but of the Council, when the Council has examined, approved and voted them. But Mr. *Spanheim* doth not find Fault with this Council, for their Explication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, or the Canons that refer to any part of that Article; but becauſe it was convened, under pretence indeed to carry on the War againſt the *Saracens*, in the Holy Land; but really to raiſe a Cruſade (or Holy War) againſt the *Albigenſes*, and to confirm the Vaſſalage of

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John King of *England* to the See of *Rome*, againſt the Conſent of the Engliſh Peerage; that is (in ſhort) to inlarge the Juriſdiction, and increaſe the Authority of the Weſtern Patriarch, or Biſhop of *Rome*.

2. My ſecond (as I ſaid, inconteſtable) Proof, that *the Nominal Trinitarians* are the Church, is, that the *Divinity-Chairs*, and all *Writers*, whether of *Controverſy*, or *Syſtems*, have ever followed the Doctrine of the Schools (which is the Doctrine of the *Nominal Trinitarians*) and the Creed, and 2*d* Canon of the (beforeſaid) Council of *Lateran*, in declaring the Doctrine of the Trinity. They all take it, as the *Council-Schools* and *Nominals* do, for their Foundation; That "there is but one only "and ſelf-ſame Divine Subſtance: "and in that Subſtance, but one (in-"finite) Underſtanding, but one "(almighty) Energy, and Will, "*in number*. Which is to ſay, there is but one really *Subſiſting* (divine) Perſon, or God is but one *ſubſiſting Perſon*; tho in a Critical or Claſſical Senſe of the word *Perſons*, namely, when *Perſons* is uſed only for *various Relations* of the ſame really *ſubſiſting Perſon*, we may ſay there are three Divine Perſons. A *ſubſiſting Perſon* is (by Confeſſion of all) one particular Subſtance, having (one) Underſtanding, Will and Energy (or power of Action) in number: therefore God being (according to the Council, Schools, and all Nominals) one Subſtance, or one particular ſpiritual Subſtance, with one only Underſtanding, Energy and Will; he can be, according to them, but one *ſubſiſting Perſon*, tho he may be more Metaphyſical or Claſſical Perſons, that is, more Relations or Properties. This, I ſay, is the Doctrine of that Council, of the Schools, and of the *Nominal Trinitarians*; and it has always been approved and taught by the Divinity-Chairs, and by the Writers both of Syſtems and Controverſy; therefore the Nominals, not the Realiſts, are the Church.

I ſhall grant, that the real Trinitarians have on their ſide, the moſt (and moſt conſiderable) of *the Fathers*; reckoning from about the Year of Chriſt 140, and meaning thoſe Fathers, whoſe Writings have been ſuffered to come down to our Times; and excepting out of the Number, the Party in the firſt *Nicen* Council, which ſome little time after the breaking up of that Council, were conſidered as the Orthodox Party, and the Church, and were perſecuted as ſuch by the *Arians*: But the Nominals have what is much more conſiderable, all *the Moderns*; accounting the Moderns from the Council of *Lateran*, or the Year 1215. Since that Council, Learning, and more eſpecially Theological Learning, has not only been revived, but greatly improved; the later Divines have been better Criticks, Interpreters, Philoſophers, than the Fathers were; and the two laſt Ages only, have afforded more Hundreds of able Divines, than there were ſingle Perſons of the Fathers. Of the Latin Fathers, only

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St. *Jerom* would have been accounted a Learned Divine in our Age; and of the Greeks, *Origen*, *Euſebius*, the two *Gregories*, *Baſil*, St. *John Chryſoſtom*, and four or five more: had the reſt wrote in any part of the two laſt Ages, they ſhould undoubtedly have been reckoned among *the Scriblers*. The *Nominals* therefore, if you demand *Authority*, produce a General Council, not only eſtabliſhing their Hypotheſis, or Explication of the Trinity, but denouncing *Anathema* to the contrary Doctrine and *the Realiſts*: if you require *a Poll*, if you will be judged by moſt Votes, they have for them an hundred (far more Learned) *Moderns*, againſt one *Father* who can be cited for their Oppoſers, the *Realiſts*.

Why the Nominals *are ſo called; their Doctrine, and Agreement with the* Unitarians.

THE Church then, as I ſaid, is unqueſtionably *the Nominal Party*; and this Party is ſo called, becauſe as *the Realiſts* are denominated from their believing three diſtinct Divine Spirits or Minds, who are ſo many *real ſubſiſting Perſons*: ſo the *Nominals* believe three Divine Perſons, who are *Perſons in Name only*, indeed and in truth they are but *one ſubſiſting Perſon*. This will appear by all more fully and clearly, by the account I ſhall now give (in their own Words and Terms) of their Doctrine, Hypotheſis, or Explication.

The Nominals are one Party in ſeveral Subdiviſions; they muſt be called one Party, becauſe their Explications ſo far agree, as really to leave but one God, and one Divine Perſon *properly and phyſically ſo called*. All the Diviſions of the *Nominals* accord, that there is but one *only* and *ſelf-ſame* Divine Eſſence and Subſtance; the Divine Subſtance according to them, is *one in Number*: not, as the Realiſts hold, *one in Properties only*; which indeed were only *a likeneſs* of Subſtances, not *an Unity*. As the Divine Subſtance is numerically One, ſo (according to the Nominals) is the Divine Underſtanding, Energy, and Will; they are not repeated as the Perſons are, but they are one as ſtrictly and properly, as the Eſſence or Subſtance is one: Or more clearly, if it may be, thus; as there is but one Divine ſpiritual Subſtance, ſo there is but one (omniſcient) Underſtanding, but one (omnipotent) Energy, but one (moſt Holy) Will. They allow indeed of three Perſons in the Senſe hereafter declared; but all theſe Perſons have but one Underſtanding, one Will, one Energy in Number. Having laid this honeſt and ſound Foundation, they take a Latitude, and without quarrelling with, or cenſuring

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one another, in declaring what is to be meant by the three Persons. One saith, they are only three Acts of God, whereby he is denominated after three several manners. On the account of his Creating, Redeeming, and Sanctifying Mankind, he is called three Persons: for (say these Gentlemen) a Creator is a Person, a Redeemer is a Person, a Sanctifier is a Person. If you reply, true; but one Person may perform all these Acts, and sustain all these Denominations: they answer, you have rightly understood them, for they intend not to say, there are three (Divine) *physical* or *subsisting* Persons, but three Persons in a Critical or Classical (or if you will, Metaphysical) sense of the word Persons. For instance, three such Persons as one Man, who happens to be a *King*, a *Husband*, and a *Father*, may be said to be. Every Body knows who is that Learned *Professor* that preached this Trinity, first in three *Sermons* to the University of *Oxford*, with great applause; afterwards maintained it with no less Approbation among the *London* Divines, in divers *Letters* by him published. The *Socinians*, not only never denied three such Persons in God, or such a Trinity, but as willingly avow it, as this Professor himself, his Learned Auditory at *Oxford*, or his Admirers at *London*. Why are *we* Hereticks, while *he* is not only confest to be Orthodox, and Catholick, but is esteemed as (a worthy and deserving) *Apologist for the Faith?* Why may not the Author of the *Brief Notes on the Creed of Athanasius*, or he of the *Considerations on the Explications and Defences of the Trinity*, succeed to this Professor in his Canonship, at *Christ-Church?* It cannot be denied, that could they but prevaricate, they might pass for as Orthodox, and as sound Trinitarians, as the very greatest and bittrest of their Calumniators: their Faith concerning God is the same, both for Sense and Terms; but the Professor, though a real Unitarian, and only a Nominal Trinitarian, can *asperse Socinus*, they (on the contrary) see no reason to disclaim their Friends and Partisans.

Other *Nominals* soar high; they explain their Trinity after a very peculiar and surprizing manner. The Father, say they, is *the Fountain of the Deity*, the Author and the Cause of the other two Persons; he is *original Mind and Wisdom:* who from all Eternity most perfectly *understood* himself and his own Perfections, and also *Willed* (that is, Loved) himself in a most perfect manner. No one will doubt (say they) that God always, or from all Eternity, perfectly understood himself: and 'tis Natural and Connate to every Being that hath Understanding, to Will (or Love) himself; φιλαυτία or *Self-love* is an Affection naturally arising in intellectual Beings; 'tis the first Affection of such Beings, and adheres inseparably to them. But seeing whatsoever understandeth, doth understand by conceiving within it self *an Image* of the thing understood; therefore

therefore the Father (as hath been ſaid) underſtanding himſelf from all Eternity, conceived within himſelf (from all Eternity) a moſt *perfect Image* of himſelf. Which Image, becauſe thus conceived, and as it were *generated* by him, is called *the Son*; 'tis alſo called the Wiſdom of God, *his reflex Wiſdom*, becauſe 'tis the Wiſdom that *reſulteth* from the Father's underſtanding himſelf, and his own Perfections. As God underſtandeth, he *Willeth* alſo (or Loveth) himſelf: this ſecond Act, or God's Loving himſelf, is the Holy Spirit or third Perſon; as underſtanding himſelf (or the *reflex* Wiſdom of *original* Mind and Wiſdom) was the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity. To underſtand one ſelf, and to love (or will) one ſelf in created and finite Beings, are but *only Acts of the Underſtanding and Will*; but in God, we call them Perſons. Though nothing can be more ridiculous, than this account of a Trinity; yet to purchaſe their quiet, the Socinians are content *to wear a ſtrange, and odd Badg.* For Peace-ſake, they will ſay with our Holy Mother the Church, Underſtanding (or *reflex Wiſdom*) is a Perſon, and *Love* another Perſon; and theſe two, with *original Wiſdom*, ſhall be called *a Trinity.* Indeed we could wiſh, that ſo grave a Matron as the Church, would leave off Trifling: but ſeeing for the main of it, the thing is true; for 'tis true, that the Father is *original Mind* or Wiſdom, and *he Underſtandeth*, and *Willeth* himſelf; we can bear with a little impropriety in ſpeaking of Things. The Church requires us to ſay, Father, Son and Spirit, Trinity, three Divine Perſons: but ſhe declares at the ſame time, that the meaning only is, *God* (or original Mind) *Underſtandeth and Loveth himſelf:* it would be hard if Sons ſhould contend with a Mother, about a few (*uncouth, or ill-choſe*) Terms and Words, on which ſhe (confeſſedly) puts a ſober meaning, a Senſe no way contrary to the Unity of God, or that there is in truth but one *ſubſiſting* Divine Perſon.

Well, here are two Explications of the Trinity, by the *Nominals.* The firſt ſaith, the Trinity of Divine Perſons are the three *external* Acts of Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification; or God conſidered as the Creator, the Redeemer, and Sanctifier of the World, or of Mankind. The other ſaith, the ſecond and third Perſons of the Trinity, are indeed three Acts of God, but they are *internal* Acts, even his Underſtanding and Loving himſelf: So that the whole Trinity is *original Mind* (or the *ſubſiſting* Perſon of the Father) *Knowing* and *Willing* himſelf; ſo theſe two Parties. But another Diviſion of the *Nominals* tell us, the Divine Perſons are not bare Acts of God, whether External or Internal, but they are three *Attributes* of God: Goodneſs, Wiſdom, and Power, ſay they, are that Trinity which the Church teaches; and ſhe teaches no other. But then, ſay I, 'tis evident again, that the Church and the

Socinians are well agreed; for the latter, no leſs than the former, believe this Trinity; and the only Hereticks in theſe Queſtions, are the *Real Trinitarians*, who believe a Trinity of three really *ſubſiſting Perſons*, three *diſtinct Spirits*, three (Almighty, All-knowing) Beings.

But they are not very many, tho they are Learned Men, that ſpeak after theſe manners: the School-men, and the Divines that follow them, and who more properly are the Nominal Party, deliver themſelves in other Terms; though in the main, in what truly gives to them the Name of *Nominal Trinitarians*, all the Diviſions of them perfectly agree. Becauſe we litigate in the Engliſh Tongue, and conteſt theſe Queſtions only with Engliſh Writers; it will be fit to repreſent the Doctrine of the Schools, or the Party which (I ſaid) are more properly (it may be) the Nominal Trinitarians, out of the late Books of Dr. *S--th* againſt Dr. *Sherlock*. They teach, that God or the Trinity is one (Numerical ſelf-ſame) Spiritual and Divine Subſtance, one (only) Spirit, one (ſolitary) Being. And though he is three Perſons (by which, what they mean we ſhall ſee preſently); there is in the whole Trinty but one (infinite) *Underſtanding*, one (ſoveraign) *Will*, one (almighty) *Energy* or Power of Action in *Number*. This one Divine *intellectual Subſtance*, or really *ſubſiſting Perſon*, is (at it were) diſtinguiſhed and diverſified by three *relative Modes*, or *relative Subſiſtences*: which Subſiſtences or Modes are ſo intirely *Relative*, that their very *Subſiſtence is nothing elſe but their Relation*; their Relation is not ſomewhat conſequent upon, or ſupervenient to their Subſiſtence, as in created Perſons, but is one and the ſame with it. Theſe relative Modes being three in Number, are the three *Perſonalities* of the Deity; but the *concrete* and *abſtract* Terms (namely Perſonalities and Perſons) are but only different ways of expreſſing the ſame thing. And therefore as we deſcribe the *Perſonalities* in the Godhead, by *Relations*; relative *Subſiſtences*, relative *Modes*, relative *Properties*, or ſuch like: So we ſay alſo that every *Perſon* (as well as every *Perſonality*) *in the Trinity is wholly Relative*; that is, that which makes the firſt Perſon in the Trinity to be *a Perſon*, makes him to be *a Father*; and what makes him to be *a Father*, makes him to be a Perſon; ſo that (as we have but now ſaid) both Perſons and Perſonalities in the Trinity are *meerly Relations*, or relative Properties of the one (ſelf-ſame) Divine Subſtance, Being, or Spirit. Theſe three relative Modes, Relations, or relative Properties, in the Divine Subſtance or Godhead, are *Innaſcibility* or Paternity, *paſſive Generation*, and *paſſive Spiration*; in plainer Engliſh, to *Beget*, to be *Begotten*, and to Proceed or be *Breathed*: the firſt maketh the Perſon of the Father, the other two make or conſtitute the Son and Holy Spirit. This is the Sum of what

Doctor

Doctor *S--th* ſaith in his laſt Book, or *Tritheiſm Charged*, pag. 156, 157. Mr. *Hooker* (Author of the Eccleſiaſtical Policy) expreſſes this Doctrine, though not ſo fully, yet more intelligibly to the Unlearned, in theſe words. " The Subſtance of " God, with this property *to be of* " *none*, doth make the Perſon of the " Father; the very ſelf-ſame Subſtance *in Number*, with this property *to be of the Father*, maketh " the Perſon of the Son; the ſame " Subſtance having added to it the " property of *proceeding from the other two*, maketh the Perſon of " the Holy Ghoſt: So that in every " Perſon there is implied both *the* " *Subſtance* of God, which is one, " and alſo that Property which cauſeth the ſame Perſon [that is to " ſay, the Divine Subſtance with " one of the three Properties before " ſaid, as ſuppoſe the Property *to be* " *of none*] really and truly to differ " from the other two. That is, to differ from the Divine Subſtance conſidered under the Properties *to be of the Father*, and *to proceed from the Father and Son*. Mr. *Hooker* then, as well as Dr. *S--th*, underſtood the Doctrine of the Schools and Church concerning the Trinity, to be this. That there is but one infinite intellectual Divine Subſtance *in Number*, which Subſtance is the Subject (if we may ſo ſpeak) of ſundry Divine Attributes, ſuch as Omnipotence, perfect Goodneſs, conſummate Holineſs, and the reſt: none of which Attributes is more than once in the Divine Subſtance or Godhead; there is in God but one Omniſcience, one Omnipotence, one Holineſs, one Goodneſs in number; as the Nature or Subſtance is but one in number, ſo each Attribute is but once (not thrice) in the Nature, or Godhead. But then beſides theſe *Attributes*, there are alſo three *Perſons* in God; not *ſubſiſting Perſons*, for that would plainly make three Beings, three Spirits, and three Gods; but three ſuch Perſons as in very Deed are but ſo many Properties, or Modes, or if you will give them any the like Name. Such Properties as Grammarians and Claſſical Authors (and after them, Metaphyſicians) call Perſons: for according to them, a Father is a Perſon, a Son is a Perſon, a Sanctifier is a Perſon; and whoſoever ſuſtains theſe three Relations (or any other the like) is by them called three Perſons. Thus, for example, *M. Tullius*, acknowledges in every Man no leſs than four Perſons; namely, firſt, *The rational Nature*, by which we differ from Brutes; next, the *particular Properties* (of Body and Mind) which diſtinguiſh one rational Nature (or Man) from another; thirdly, the circumſtance, or *manner of Life* of each Man, as that he is a Rich Man or a Poor; laſtly, *The Profeſſion* that any one takes up, as to be a Civilian, a Profeſſor in Philoſophy, a Pleader, a Poet, or Writer to the Stage. *De Officiis*; *l.* 2. *c.* 30, 32. A Perſon then in grammatical, *critical ſpeaking*, is not a *ſubſiſting Being*; but ſome either (characteri-

zing) Property, or ſome Relation, or State, of a ſubſiſting intellectual Being: and it is of Perſons, *critically ſo called*, that the Church would be underſtood, when ſhe ſays, there are three Perſons in God; ſhe doth not mean *three ſubſiſting Perſons*, or Perſons who are called Perſons, becauſe they are ſo many intellectual Beings. Dr. *S--th* very well underſtood the Doctrine of the Schools, when he notes; that the three Divine Perſons are three *relative Subſiſtences*, but ſo (ſaith he) that their *Subſiſtence* is nothing elſe but their *Relation*; that is, they are *meer States, Modes*, or *Relations, which (in a ſenſe) ſubſiſt in the Divine Subſtance, Nature, or Godhead.* Which indeed is to ſay, God is three Perſons, as any particular Man may be three Perſons: for the ſame Man may be a Father, a Son, and may proceed from two others; namely, from Father and Mother. And though this is not the very manner of God's being three Perſons; yet the ternary Perſonality in God is founded on the ſame Notion and Conception of the word Perſons: and that Conception no more deſtroys his real Unity, whether as a Being, as a Spirit, or as God, than that three-fold Perſonality in a Man, makes him to be more than one Man, or than one *ſubſiſting Perſon.* The ſhort is, according to theſe Gentlemen, God is but one *ſubſiſting* (or real Perſon: but this one (phyſical) Perſon having three (internal) Relations, is thereby three *relative Perſons*; three ſuch Perſons as one Man (or one Angel) who happens to have three Relations, is. The three *relative Perſons* no more contradict the Unity of God, than the threefold Relation of *Solomon*, namely, as *Son* of *David*, as *Father* of *Rehoboam*, and as *proceeding* from *David* and *Bathſheba*, contradicts his being but one Man, or one *ſubſiſting* and *phyſical* Perſon.

It is well known, what Judgment the *Real Unitarians* make of this Explication of the Trinity. Mr. *How* (becauſe he delights to be civil) contents himſelf to ſay; the Real Trinitarians will judg, it is not Senſe; *View of the Conſiderations*, pag. 50. The Biſhop of *Gloc.* thinks it can have little better Succeſs, than only to make ſport for the *Socinians*; ſo he concludes his 28 *Propoſitions* in his 2*d Defence* of them. But Dr. *Cudworth* cries, *'tis the Philoſophy of* Gotham. Nay, Mr. *How* himſelf, though out of regard to ſo great a Party as the Nominal Trinitarians are, he will only ſay of their Explication, *'tis not Senſe*; yet he reckons *P. Lombard*, the ſuppoſed Parent of this Explication of the Trinity, *one of the four Evangeliſts of Anti-Chriſt.* Dr. *Bull* alſo, and the Learned Author (Mr. *J. B.*) of the Anſwer to Dr. *S--th's* Animadverſions on Dr. *Sherlock*, ſay a great many bitter things of the Divines of the Schools, by occaſion of this (ſenſeleſs) Explication of the Trinity. Theſe Gentlemen cannot bear it, that the ſame *intellectual Subſtance* in number, which is but only to ſay *the*

ſame

same numerical Person, should be made to be three Persons, because of three (pretended) internal Relations, or *a threefold Relation to himself*, which he is (absurdly) feigned to sustain. They confess, that the same intellectual Substance, or *subsisting Person*, may be *a Father*, and *Son*, and may *proceed* from another, or others: but then these must be *external*, not *internal* Relations; that is, he cannot be Father and Son to himself, as is implied in the Scholastick Explication, because it supposes this Father, Son, and Proceeder, are really but one *subsisting* (or physical) Person, though they are three (and may be 300) Critical or *Metaphysical Persons*. If the Schools and Nominals said, God is three Persons, because of three *external Relations*, that is, three Relations to his Creatures: this might be understood, because the same Man may have three Relations to others, and is (on that account) called by *Classical Writers* three Persons, though *now*, and *in the English Tongue* that Sense of the word *Persons* is quite out of Use. But to talk of three *internal Relations*, or that the same intellectual Substance (which is to say, the same subsisting or *physical Person*) is Unbegotten, and Begotten, is *of none*, and yet *proceeds from two*; to make him a Father and a Son, when there is none but himself to whom he is either way so related: it is such pitious Trifling, as utterly destroys the Patience of the *Realists* that hear it; while others think that the Philosopher, who is said never to have laughed but once, might even have done it a second Time on this ocation. In very Deed, our Brother *S--th* has need of all his Talents and Helps, his Leisure, Learning, Wit, Courage, the Council of *Lateran*, and all the *Moderns*, to defend him against the insults of the Realists; who have here so manifest an Advantage, and are (for the most part) Men so able to take and manage it, that he will find at length, he has no way to rescue his Explication or himself, but by Recriminating; that is, by shewing the as great Absurdity, and plain Impossibility of the Explication of the Trinity by the Realists.

It may be worth while to inquire here, whether the Nominals do not know, or are not aware, that in very deed they are Unitarians, or (as some call us) Socinians? I am of Opinion they are sensible of it, and I ground my self on the express words of some of them, and those too the most esteemed: For example, Dr. *J. Wallis*, and Dr. *S--th* intimate plainly enough; that the Socinian Doctrine and theirs, is the same. Dr. *Wallis* answering to a Socinian, in his 3*d* Letter of *Vindication of the Athanasian Creed*, p. 62, 63. has these words. "That "which makes these Expressions "[he means the Terms used by Tri- "nitarians, especially this, *God is* "*three Persons*, or *three Persons are* "*one God*] seem harsh to *the Soci-* "*nians*, is, because they have used "themselves to fancy that Notion on- "ly of the word *Person*, according to "which

" which *three Men* are accounted to " be *three Perſons*, and theſe three " Perſons to be three Men. But " they may conſider there is ano- " ther Notion of the word *Perſon*, " and in common uſe too, wherein " *the ſame Man* may be ſaid to " ſuſtain *divers Perſons*, and thoſe " Perſons to be the ſame Man, that " is, the ſame Man ſuſtaining divers " Capacities. And then it will " ſeem no more harſh to ſay, the " three Perſons, Father, Son, and " Holy Ghoſt, are one God; than " to ſay, God the Creator, God the " Redeemer, and God the Sanctifier, is one God: which I ſuppoſe, even *to this Anſwerer* [he means the Socinian, to whom he is there anſwering] would not ſeem " *harſh*, or be thought *nonſenſe*. Here he ſaith theſe two things; 1. That *three Perſons* when affirmed of God, are not to be taken as when we ſay, *three Men* are *three Perſons*; but in that ſenſe, wherein the *ſame Man* is commonly (he means by Grammarians and Claſſical Authors) called three Perſons, becauſe he hath three Capacities; as (ſuppoſe) of a King, an Husband, and a Father. This is the Senſe, in which God is ſaid to be a Trinity, or three Perſons: he hath theſe three Capacities, of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; and in that regard (or ſenſe) is ſaid to be three Perſons. 2. That to a Socinian, this account not only will not be *Non-ſenſe*, but not ſo much as *harſh* or uncouth. No one can deny, that the Doctor well perceived, that the Socinian Doctrine and his were indeed the ſame: a Socinian, he ſays, would not be offended at this Explication of a Trinity of *Perſons*; Perſon here not being intended for *a ſubſiſting Perſon*, as a particular Man is, but for *a Capacity* only of a really ſubſiſting Perſon. And whereas the Socinian Author of *the Conſiderations on the Explications of the Trinity had ſaid*; if Dr. *S--th* and the Nominal Party believe but one Divine Subſtance in Number, which hath one only Underſtanding, one Will, one Energy or power of Action in Number, he is a Socinian or Unitarian; for in very Deed, this is but one (really) *ſubſiſting Perſon*: Dr. *S--th* nothing abaſh'd, with his uſual dexterity and preſence of Mind, anſwers to this effect; That " ſo he " believes, and ſo the Church be- " lieves, and that 'tis a good hear- " ing, that the Socinians are come " over to him, and to the Church, " or *fall in with him, and the Church.* I cannot at preſent find the particular page of *Tritheiſm charged*, where this is ſaid, not having made a mark againſt thoſe Lines; but I remember well, that I report rightly the Senſe of the Paſſage. His words need no Comment, they are a plain acknowledgment that (by that way of expreſſing themſelves) the Socinians fall in with the Church, and with him. But whereas he ſaith, they fall in with the Church, as the Socinians are content, that in Honour to the Church it be ſo ſaid: ſo *the Engliſh Unitarians* (or as they call

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us, Socinians) claim it as their right; to be owned the first Discoverers, that all the Heats between the Church and the Socinians, have arose from this only, that they mistook one anothers true meaning, by occasion of the canting un-scriptural Terms, *Trinity*, *Persons* (and such like) used by the Church.

For it is most true, that tho for Peace-sake we submit to the Language of the Church, as 'tis interpreted by the Nominals; yet the Church's Terms are very improper: for the same single numerical *subsisting Person* (as the Church and the Socinians believe God to be) is not *now* in any Language called three Persons, by occasion of three Relations, Modes, or Properties adhering to him; tho 'tis confessed, the (Roman) Classical Authors so spake.

But whereas the Nominals, or the Church, since the Council of *Lateran*, that they may seem not to have departed from the Fathers, still talk of *Trinity*, Paternity, Generation, Procession, Hypostatical Union, Father, Son, and Spirit; on which (as we have seen) they put such a meaning, even those of them that speak most Harshly and Improperly, as no ways destroys the Unity of God, or that he is but one *physical* and *subsisting Person*; and hereupon the *Realists* insult them, as People that know not, or at best heed not what they say: the Socinians think 'tis even necessary, nay, a due Justice, to have more regard and respect for these their weak Brethren. First, We consider; that after all the *improper* Terms, *impertinent* Language, and *unsignificant*, and sometimes *dangerous* Words, used by the Nominals; all the Denominations of them agree at length, in this Sound and Orthodox Explication and Conclusion, that there is but one Divine intellectual Substance, but one infinite Spirit, but one *subsisting Person* of God. Secondly, The Nominals choose indeed to speak (almost, a Realist would say altogether) *Nonsensically*, and to retain the dangerous *Tritheistical Terms* of the Fathers, *Trinity*, &c. but this was, that they might restore the true Faith and genuine Christianity, without Noise and Tumult: the School-Divines, and Council at *Lateran*, reformed the corrupted Doctrine of the Church, by only interpreting (soberly and dextrously) the Language and Terms, which their Tritheistick Predecessors had brought into the Church, into her very Liturgies, and Creeds.—So many Councils, so many Fathers, and from them so many Nations had affirmed a Trinity of Divine Persons; that to oppose this Doctrine, would have begot endless Strifes, bitter Contentions and Persecutions: and after all, probably the Reformers would have come off no better than the Socinians have done; that is, with all the clear Truth they have of their side, and all their Dexterity and Wit in managing it, being over-powered by the numbers of the contrary Herd, they should have been answered with

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Penal Laws, and Sanguinary Profecutions of thoſe Laws. They took therefore a Courſe that would do their Buſineſs, unperceived by the moſt; and when perceived by ſome few, it would not be hard to convict them of Tritheiſm, and explode them as Tritheiſts; and ſo *de facto* they ſerved *Abbat Joachim*. And then getting their Explication (of the Trinity) confirmed by the Council of *Lateran*, they happily reſtored the publick Profeſſion (and Faith) of the Unity of God, by an Authority which none dares to contradict: for a General Council (as was before noted) is the higheſt Court of the Church; that laſt Tribunal (on Earth) from which there lies no Appeal.

Of the Noetians *and* Sabellians.

THERE is yet another Branch of Nominal Trinitarians, more antient far than thoſe yet mentioned; for about the Year of Chriſt 200, the *Noetians*, and but a little after them the *Sabellians* aroſe: both theſe ſaid, there is but one Divine *Subſtance*, *Eſſence* or *Nature*; and as the Subſtance of the Father, Son and Spirit, is numerically One, ſo conſequently (ſaid they) there is but *one Perſon* of God; Father, Son and Spirit, are but only *three Names* of God, given to him in Scripture, by occaſion of ſo many ſeveral Diſpenſations towards the Creature. For in regard of the Creation, God is called the *Father*: he is named the *Son*, as he wrought Miracles and accompliſhed the whole Work of Man's Redemption, by the Lord Chriſt, in whom he dwelt after a peculiar and extraordinary manner; and who indeed was the Son of God, by miraculous Conception in the Womb of Holy *Mary*: He has the Name of the Holy Ghoſt or *Holy Spirit*, from his omnipotent Energy or Power, by which he effecteth all things. In a word, the *Noetians* and *Sabellians* held, that God is *but one ſubſiſting Perſon*; yet that with reſpect to things withoutHim, he may be called (as the Modern Nominals now ſpeak) *three Relative Perſons*: the one *ſubſiſting* Perſon of God ſuſtaineth the *three Names* of Father, Son and Spirit; which being the Relations of God towards things without him, he is ſo many *Relative Perſons*, or *Perſons* in a Claſſical critical Senſe.

And this too is the Explication of the Trinity, by that Party in the firſt *Nicene Council*, who contrived the word *Homo-uſios*, or *Conſubſtantial*; by which they meant, that the three Divine Perſons have all *the ſame Subſtance*: and this is the Party, which after the breaking up of that famous Council, and upon the ſudden Prevalence of the Arian Faction, were perſecuted

perſecuted by the Arians; and were conſidered by all others as the true *Nicene Party*, till about the Year of Chriſt 380, the *Realiſts* obtained that it ſhould be ſaid, that God is *tres Hypoſtaſes, three ſubſiſting Perſons.* Indeed there are ſeveral Comma's in the *Nicene* Creed, very hardly reconcilable to the *Sabellian* Doctrine: but as there were three powerful, and almoſt equal Parties in the *Nicene* Council, the Arian Party, the Realiſts, and the Sabellians; the latter thought it enough, if they could procure *Homo-uſios* (conſubſtantial) to be inſerted into the Creed. For that ambiguous Word may be interpreted in favour of all thoſe Parties. It may be interpreted *the ſame Subſtance*, the *very ſame*, or ſame in Number, and ſo it eſtabliſhes the Sabellian Doctrine; or *the ſame in Kind and all Properties*, and ſo it countenances the *Realiſts*; or it may be underſtood *of like Subſtance*, and ſo it pleaſes the *Ariani molles*, the *moderate Arians:* tho the rigid Arians in the Council would by no means admit of it; they rather choſe to loſe their Biſhopricks. But when the Council was broke up, it was perceived by the other Parties, that the zealous Aſſertors of *Homo-uſios (of the ſame Subſtance)* were all of them Sabellians; believed that God is but one *ſubſiſting Perſon*, and therefore *deſtroyed the real Exiſtence of the Son*, whom the Arians as well as the Realiſts took to be *a ſubſiſting Perſon*, not a *relative Perſon*, a *Reſpect* or a *Name* only. And as the Arians diſcovered, that the *Homo-uſians* were indeed Sabellians; ſo theſe latter charged the Arians and Realiſts as guilty of a manifeſt Tritheiſm, becauſe they ſo interpreted *Homo-uſios*, as to make Father, Son and Spirit, to be diſtinct, intellectual *Subſtances*, or *ſubſiſting Perſons.* Let us hear their own Hiſtorian, *Socrates*, L. 1. c. 23. "After the Council, the Biſhops "wrangled about the word *Homo-* "*uſios.* Thoſe that were for it, "were cenſured by the contrary Par- "ty, as *Sabellians*; and were cal- "led *Impious*, becauſe *they deſtroyed* "*the real Exiſtence of the Son.* "Thoſe that were againſt it, were "condemned by ſuch as were for "it, as reviving Gentiliſm, or *the* "*belief of more Gods.* And this Truth, that Sabellianiſm was then taken to be the *Nicene* Doctrine, or the ſame with *the Doctrine of Conſubſtantiality*, is owned by the Learned Critick *H. Valeſius*, in his Notes on *Socrates*, L. 1. c. 24. For whereas the Hiſtorian ſaith, That *Cyrus* Biſhop of *Berea* was depoſed, *for holding the Sabellian Doctrine: Valeſius* notes hereupon, in theſe words; *that is, for the Doctrine of the Conſubſtantiality*, or the Doctrine of the *Nicene* Council, which Council brought in the *Homo-uſiotes*, or Conſubſtantiality.

The Sum of what has been ſaid, concerning the Nominals.

THESE at length are the Diviſions of the *Nominals*. They all agree, that the three Perſons of God are not *ſubſiſting Perſons*; they are not ſo many diſtinct Lives, Underſtandings, Wills, or Energies, which (together with a particular Subſtance) make *a ſubſiſting Perſon*, and if they are *more than one*, they make *ſo many* phyſical real or ſubſiſting Perſons: no, they are Perſons in a quite different Senſe, from that vulgar acceptation of the word *Perſons*. They are either *three Attributes* of God; Goodneſs, Wiſdom, and Power. Or *three external Acts*; Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification. Or *two internal Acts* of the *ſubſiſting Perſon* of the Father; that is to ſay, the Father *Underſtanding*, and *Willing* himſelf and his own Perfections. Or *three internal Relations*; that is, three Relations of God to himſelf: namely, the Divine Subſtance or Godhead, conſidered as Unbegotten, Begotten, and Proceeding. Or *three Names* of God, aſcribed to him by the Holy Scriptures, becauſe he is *the Father* of all things, by Creation; and becauſe he did Inhabit and Operate (after an extraordinary and miraculous manner) in the Perſon of the Man Chriſt Jeſus, who was verily *the Son* of God by his wonderful manner of Conception; and (laſt of all) becauſe he effecteth all things (more eſpecially, our Sanctification) by his *Spirit*, which is to ſay, his Energy or Power.

Every one ſees, theſe are very crude Conceits to be dignified with the Name of *Myſteries*: but withal the Reader is to know, that the *Myſtery* is ſtill behind. For the Myſtery lies not here, that *one ſubſiſting Perſon* is made to be *three Relative Perſons*, or three *Names*, or three *Attributes*; or that God is called *Father* becauſe he Created all things, *Son* becauſe he Inhabited and Operated in the Son our Lord Chriſt, or *Spirit* becauſe he is that Almighty Energy which effected all things: for all this, though very harſh and improper, is yet intelligible; and the manner of ſpeaking in Antient Times, did warrant ſuch ways of expreſſing themſelves, as may be ſeen in the Claſſical Authors, both Romans and Greeks. But it is Myſtery, becauſe (or, as) when you apply any of theſe Explications of the Trinity, to the Incarnation, the Hypoſtatical Union, or the Satisfaction; 'tis next to impoſſible, to make any degree of Senſe of it: for how can we ſay that *an Attribute*, or *a Property*, or *a Name*, or *to be Begotten*, or any ſuch like was *Incarnate*, or *Satisfied* for Sin? as alſo becauſe the Terms *Generation* and *Proceſſion* cannot, without moſt remote

mote and ridiculous Subtleties, be applied to three Attributes; or to Underſtanding, and Willing ones ſelf; or to the ſame Unbegotten, and unproceeding Subſtance; or to Creation and Redemption and Sanctification. In ſhort, our poor Brethren the Nominals are here purely conſtrained and forced to call their Doctrine *Myſtery*; becauſe 'tis ſo hard to find a way, to reconcile it to the ordinary Forms of ſpeaking, *that is, to common Senſe.* Therefore here the Realiſts glory over them; here they have an ample Field, for Wit and Sarcaſm to parade in: here they ask the Nominals an hundred malevolent pleaſant Queſtions; to which they anſwer, by objecting Profaneſs to the Queſtioniſts, and by the ſerious word Myſtery. Moreover they (the Nominals) comfort themſelves, that the whole Myſtery (or Abſurdity) of their Doctrine, conſiſts *only in the Terms* [*Trinity*, &c.] which they are forced to retain, to preſerve the Church's Peace; *not in the Senſe*, or *thing intended:* for the meaning and Sum of their Doctrine, as they explain it, is; there is but one Divine *ſubſiſting Perſon*; not more ſuch Perſons, for that were to ſay *more Gods.*

Beſides, after all the dry Bobs of the Realiſts, on the Nominals; themſelves muſt take their turn of being jeered. For when their Explications come to be examined; and their Contradictions to, and Condemnations of one another as Tritheiſts, are conſidered: the Nominals will ſeem to be profound Philoſophers, deep Sages, in compariſon with theſe their Oppoſers; and theſe Oppoſers (the Realiſts) ſuch awkward, uncouth Ruſticks, that a great deal of Charity or Diſcretion muſt be uſed within ones ſelf, to be civil to them. But I ſhall not conſider their Perſons or Doctrine, as the Nominals do; neither with Railery, nor Anger, as the manner now is: but only as deſirous to convince them, that they have as cauſleſly departed from the Doctrine of the Church, as dangerouſly.

Of the Realiſts: *that they are divided, into two Factions; which condemn each the other, of manifeſt Tritheiſm.*

THE firſt Obſervation, to be made on the Real Trinitarians, is; not only that (as has been ſaid) they ſtand Condemned and Anathematiz'd as Hereticks, by a General Council, and by all the Moderns, who are more, and more Learned than the Fathers; or that they are every day challeng'd and impeached of Tritheiſm, by Learned Men of the Nominal Party, and Appeals made to Univerſities, and the Divinity-Chairs, againſt them: But "they "themſelves being div.d among

" themſelves, cenſure one another " as manifeſt Tritheiſts. They are divided into many Parties, but all thoſe Parties are again bandied into two principal Factions; that can never be reconciled to one another.

One of theſe Factions ſaith, that *the three Divine Perſons are every way equal:* namely, Co-eternal, alike Omnipotent, Omniſcient, and Omnipreſent. Moſt of the Fathers, after the Year 380, were of this Perſwaſion: becauſe they plainly ſaw, that to aſcribe any Perfection, or degree of that Perfection, to the Father, more than to the Son or Spirit, is to ſay in effect; that the Father only is true God, not the Son or Spirit, becauſe whoſoever hath not omnimodous Perfection, cannot be God. And for this reaſon, they affirm, and earneſtly contend; That " any one of the three Divine Per- " ſons, is equal to all the Three; " the whole Trinity is not greater, " or more perfectly God, than any " one of the Trinity is. Surely a ſtrange Paradox, that one Third ſhould be Equal, or Equivalent to the Whole. Yet the Modern Realiſts, *the moſt* hold this Opinion, as well as th Antients did.

But the more Learned and Ableſt of the Moderns, deteſt ſo much as the Mention of three Equal Divine Perſons: for what are three Gods, ſay they, if three equally Supereminent and All-ſufficient *(ſubſiſting)* Perſons are not three Gods? If they are Equal in Dignity and Power, as well as Co-eternal; we can poſſibly have no other Notion of three Gods, but three ſuch Perſons. Therefore theſe Gentlemen ſuppoſe, that the Son and Spirit are inferiour to the Father in all things; but only this, that they are Co-eternal with him: they are Subordinate to him, Dependent on him; and are Omnipotent (and the reſt of the Divine Attributes) not *ad intra*, or of themſelves, but only *as he concurs with them to all their Actions. Epiſcopius* (Inſtit. l. 4. c. 32.) and Dr. *Cudworth* (*Intellec. Syſtem*, pag. 603,604.) largely defend this Opinion; and condemn thoſe of undeniable Tritheiſm, who make the Son and Spirit to be equal to the Father. But to know the Writers, who believe the equality of the Son and Spirit with the Father, from thoſe that deny it; this Rule moſt commonly will ſerve. They that ſay the Son is αὐτόθεος (*God of himſelf, and Independent*) generally hold the abſolute Equality of all the three Perſons; and that one Perſon of the Trinity, is equal to the whole Trinity: for if he were not, they plainly ſee, he could not be *perfect God*; for ſomething would be wanting to him, that is found in the whole Trinity. But thoſe that deny αὐτότης, do (more commonly) make the Son and Spirit ſubordinate to the Father; not only in Dignity, but in all other Reſpects: but theſe, though they ground themſelves on the Authority of the Nicene Creed (which in direct oppoſition to αὐτόθεος, or *God of himſelf*, affirms, the Son is *God of God*, that is, God *of*, or *from* the

the Father) ſeldom care to ſpeak plain, that they may avoid giving Offence.

Let us conſider the Arguments, with which theſe two Factions of Realiſts attack one another: and what effectual uſe *the Nominals* make of thoſe very Arguments, to ridicule and deſtroy both Parties, and their common Principle or Foundation, namely this; that the Divine Perſons are *ſubſiſting Perſons*, not Perſons, but only critically ſo called.

By what Arguments the Parties of Realiſts, *attack and oppoſe each the other; and what (effectual) Uſe, the* Nominals *make of this Contention.*

FIRST, ſay they who affirm the Equality; if the Son and Spirit are Subordinate in Dignity and Authority, and inferior in Power and other Divine Attributes: it ſeems ſelf-evident, that either the Father only muſt be ſaid to be truly God, becauſe he only hath omnimodous Perfection, and in the higheſt Degree; or that there is *one Great God*, and *two Inferior* or leſſer ones. To this, they that maintain the Inequality of the three Perſons, anſwer; by retorting the Argument, thus: If the Divine Perſons are equal, then there are *three Omnipotents*, and *three Omniſcients*; which is the very Notion of three Gods, and is denied *in terminis* (or expreſly) by the Athanaſian Creed, which ſaith, *not three Almighties, but one Almighty*, &c.

But was it ever heard, ſince the Creation of things, ſay (the common Enemy to both) *the Nominals*; that two contending erroneous Parties, did more effectually ruin one another's common Miſtake? For as 'tis ſelf-evident on the one Hand, that it being the very Definition of God (the Notion that all Men have of him) that he is a Being Omnimodouſly (or abſolutely) Perfect; therefore if the Son or Spirit want ſome Perfections, or ſome degree of Perfection, neither of them can be God, but the Father only: So on the other hand, 'tis no leſs inconteſtable; that three Diſtinct, and (really) *ſubſiſting Perſons*, each of which poſſeſſes all Perfections, and every degree of thoſe Perfections, muſt (of neceſſity) be three Gods. Why do not theſe unhappy Men, ſay the Nominals, ſee; that three Almighties, and three Omniſcients, are moſt certainly three Gods: and that on the contrary, if only one of them is (internally and verily) Almighty, as well as Superiour in Dignity to the other two; he only is true God, they are Gods *only by Courteſy and Civility of Speech?* Do not the two contrary Arguments of theſe unlucky Reaſoners, make a Dilemma; that

that overthrows their common Foundation, even this, that the Perſons of the Trinity are *ſubſiſting Perſons?* Have they not ſhown us, how to argue ſucceſsfully againſt them both; for we learn from themſelves, to ſay: either the (imagined) *ſubſiſting Perſons* of their Trinity are equal, or not equal; if equal, they muſt be three Gods, *becauſe nothing is wanting to any of them toward making him a perfect God*; if unequal, only one of them is properly and truly God, the other two by Civility and Courteſy only; they may be Gods to thoſe that have a mind to compliment, but wanting ſome Perfections, or ſome Degrees of Perfection, neither of them can be God in a Theological or Philoſophical Senſe. But the Pleaſure and Sport of the Nominals increaſes, when the Realiſts ſeek to extricate themſelves from theſe Noozes. For example.

The Realiſts that are for the Equality, ſay; Father, Son, and Spirit, though omnimodouſly Perfect (and ſubſiſting) Perſons, are one God, *by their mutual Concord and Agreement:* So alſo *Origen*, and other Antenicenes, make out the Unity of God in a Ternary of Perſons; tho they did not believe the Equality. To this, the Nominals anſwer; the (ſuppoſed) Divine *ſubſiſting Perſons* are hereby *loving Friends*; which is a good Hearing, for ſhould three *Almighties* fall out, what would the World do? but if they are not only *diſtinct*, but *ſubſiſting* Perſons, they are as much *three Gods, in a proper and natural Senſe*, as if they were never ſo much *at odds*; Concord doth not make a Real or Phyſical Unity, which is the Unity of God, but only a *Moral Unity*, or ſuch as is between *Friends* or *Allies*.

Other Realiſts, almoſt all the Moderns, ſee, and confeſs this; therefore they ſay, their Gods are one; *becauſe they are in one another*. But ſay the Nominals, God is in his Creatures, more eſpecially in the Faithful, and they in him; as our Saviour himſelf witneſſes: are they thereby all but one God? is the Creature deified by being in God, and he in us?

No, no, ſay others; but the Divine Perſons who are thus *in* one another, *have like Subſtances, Natures, and Properties:* which cannot be ſaid of God and the Creatures. Admirable again, cry the Nominals; but remove this one Scruple. If theſe *reſembling Gods*, are ſo united in their Subſtances, or ſo *in* one another; that their Subſtances are *continuous*, like the Parts of the ſame Angel, or like the (aſſignable) Parts of the ſame Divine Perſon, 'tis plain that by ſuch an Union (or mutual Immeation) of their Parts, they are become but one (ſubſiſting) Perſon in number, which is what the Nominals and Socinians contend for: but if they are only ſo united, or ſo *in* one another, that their Parts are only *Contiguous*, like Wine and Oil ſhook together, and yet never incorporating; this is but only Contact and *Juxta-poſition*,

on, and doth not make the three Perſons to be one, much leſs one God, any more than all the Men *in a cloſe Croud* are one Man, or than the Wine and Oil (before-ſaid) are one Subſtance. In a word, ſay the Nominals, who ſees not; that the three Divine *ſubſiſting* Perſons, having *like Subſtances* or Properties, or what is all one, *like Natures*, are but only *Gods reſembling one another?* and whether they be *in* or *out* of one another, *likes are never the ſame.*

'Tis well; but it may be, they have better luck, who ſay the Divine Perſons are not equal; but the Second and Third are ſubordinate in Authority, and inferiour in their Perfections. The Objection againſt them, is; that hereby, either the ſecond and third Perſons, are neither of them God, but only the Firſt: or here is one great God, and two leſſer. They reply, that as a Father and his two Sons, are one Maſter of the Family; though the Authority and Power is in the Father, and only ſecondarily derivatively, and leſs abſolutely in the Sons: So Father, Son, and H. Spirit are one God, becauſe the two latter (though ſubject and inferior to the former) have like Authority and Power with him, *for that he always concurs with them.* But the Nominals cry; this is not one God, in a Phyſical or Natural Senſe, but only in a Political: and that the (ſuppoſed) Father of the Family and his two Sons, may as well be ſaid to be *one Man*; as *one Maſter.* For in very Deed, only the Father is Maſter; though he delegates Authority and Power to his Children, during his Pleaſure: or if Power and Authority is abſolutely and irrevocably conferred on them, they are as much Maſters as he; and there is no longer one Maſter, but three.

Secondly, Another Argument of thoſe that contend for the Equality, is; if the Son and Spirit are unequal to the Father, and he only hath omnifarious Perfection, with all degrees of thoſe Perfections: then *the two former are very unneceſſarily ſuperadded to the latter*; he is perfect God without them, they add nothing to him; we can underſtand *them* but only *as Foils* to ſet off, and to recommend his Perfections.

This Reaſoning alſo is retorted, by them that hold the inequality of the Perſons in the (ſuppoſed) Trinity: for they reply; if there are three equally perfect (Divine) *ſubſiſting Perſons*, two of them are redundant, or *more than needs.* If we ſuppoſe them, ſay theſe Gentlemen, unequal, we leave but one God; becauſe the Second and Third are God but only as they are united to the Firſt, by *his* Concurrence with them, and by *their* Subordination and Subjection to him: but if we ſay, they are equal; here are two unneceſſary Perſons ſuppoſed not only without any cauſe for it, for any one of theſe *abſolutely perfect Perſons* is ſufficient for himſelf, and for the Creation; but the Unity alſo of God, the firſt and moſt important

Article

Article of *Revealed Religion*, is loſt, becauſe it cannot be imagined, but That "three (*ſubſiſting*) abſolutely "perfect Perſons muſt be *as* truly "three Gods, *as* one ſuch Perſon "(which no Body will deny) is "one God.

Here again the Nominals ſee, and take their Advantage: 'tis well, very well argued, Gentlemen, ſay they, on both ſides. For 'tis ſo true, as not to be queſtioned; that if the *ſubſiſting Perſons* which you have imagined, are unequal, and only one of them is *All-ſufficient*, for himſelf, and for the Creation: the two *impotent Perſons* are but dead *Weights*; of no uſe, but only that the other may be the better pleaſed at his own Perfection, when compared with their Littleneſs. And 'tis true again, what the other Party ſays; that of three ſubſiſting *All-ſufficient* Perſons, two are not only redundant, but take away the Unity of God: for if 'tis true, that one ſuch Perſon is a perfect God, three of them (for that very Reaſon) muſt be three perfect Gods. Why do you not perceive, ſay the Nominals to the Realiſts, that your own Arguments deſtroy your Hypotheſis? one *perfect* Perſon and two *imperfect* Perſons are indeed one God, but the whole God-head then is in the *perfect* Perſon, as We and the Socinians contend: and three (ſubſiſting) abſolutely perfect Perſons are a Trinity, not only of Perſons, but (becauſe each of them is abſolutely Perfect) of Gods. O ſtrange Inadvertence, ſay theſe Gentlemen! that Men ſhould not ſee, that one perfect Perſon is alone a (moſt) compleat God, and is not helped to be more ſo, by the addition of two Imperfects: and that three perfect (ſubſiſting) Perſons either are three Gods, or one cannot be one God; but *one perfect Perſon* is the very Definition of God, dictated to us by Natural Light.

Again, *Thirdly*; Say they that hold the Equality of the Perſons. If the ſecond and third Perſons are inferiour in Power, and other Divine Attributes, and Subordinate in Dignity and Authority; they muſt be *infinitely* Inferiour, and *infinitely* Subordinate; for whatſoever is ſhort of infinite Perfection, is infinitely ſhort of it: for if a Perfection is not Infinite, 'tis but only Finite, which is infinitely ſhort of Infinite; as all both Philoſophers and Divines agree. Let us apply *this*, to the (ſuppoſed) *ſubſiſting* Divine Perſons: if the Second and Third are *leſs Perfect* than the Firſt, they are (for that Reaſon) but finitely Perfect, and conſequently are infinitely ſhort of the Perfection of the Firſt. But will you ſay, in the hearing of ſober and diſcerning Perſons; that a finite Perfection or Perſon is God? *God*, ſay the Party that hold the Inequality; but if it is ſo certain (as you take it to be) that two leſs perfect Beings can neither of them be God, but only an abſolutely perfect Perſon: it will follow however, from this very Reaſoning, that three perfect Perſons are three Gods. Becauſe for that very Cauſe, why

why you affirm, that of two leſs perfect Perſons, neither of them can be God; you muſt ſay, three perfect Perſons are three Gods: for the weight of your Argument, laying in this Suppoſition, That "only a "perfect Perſon, and every ſuch Per- "ſon, is a perfect God; you muſt either give up *that*, or own that your whole Reaſoning is Impertinent and Null.

The Nominals turn alſo this Concertation againſt the common Hypotheſis of both theſe Parties of Realiſts. How well, ſay they, and ſurely is it argued by the former; that Perſons leſs than abſolutely Perfect, are (of neceſſity) but finitely Perfectly, and conſequently cannot be Gods, or God? and 'tis as ſoundly urged; that if *this* be a good Reaſoning, if imperfect Perſons cannot be Gods or God, and a perfect Perſon is, then three or more perfect Perſons muſt be more Gods: becauſe "as Imperfection or leſs Perfection "denies God-head; ſo the omni- "modous abſolute Perfection of "Perſons, muſt make ſo many Gods "as there are *ſuch* Perſons.

But hitherto of the firſt Obſervation on the Realiſts; that the two grand Factions of them, and which include all their leſſer Parties, condemn one another of Tritheiſm: and that the Church, or Nominal Trinitarians, turn the Arguments of the contending Parties of Realiſts, againſt them and the Principle for which they ſtrive; namely, That the Perſons of the Trinity are *ſubſiſting Perſons*; when indeed 'tis only God that *really ſubſiſts*, the *Perſons* of the Godhead are only Perſons *critically ſo called*, that is, they are only *Relative Subſiſtences*, they are but only the internal Relations of God to himſelf, or his external (threefold) Relation to his Creatures.

That the Realiſts *themſelves do not diſſemble their Tritheiſm.*

MY next Obſervation on them, is; That "themſelves do "(ſometimes almoſt openly, and "explicitely) own and profeſs their "Tritheiſm; both the Antients, and "Moderns; both thoſe that hold "the Equality of Perſons, and thoſe "that deny it. Let us take ſome Examples, of this.

Arnobius calls the Father, and in contradiſtinction to the Son, Deum Principem, *the principal God*; he calls the Son, *Deum ex Principis Dei juſſione loquentem, The God who ſpeaks by the Commandment of the chief God.* l. 2. p. 81. But can it ever be avoided; that *a principal* God, and *a leſs principal* God, who ſpeaks only by command from *the chief God*, are too Gods?

Juſtin Martyr calls the Son, Θεὸν ὑπερέτην τῦ παντὸς ὅλων Θεῦ, *the*

God who is Servant, to God the maker of all things. Dialog. cum Tryph. pag. 279. Are not *God the Servant*, and the *God to whom he is Servant*, moſt certainly two Gods? do not theſe Predications manifeſtly ſuppoſe and imply them to be diſtinct Gods: can the ſame God in number, be ſaid to be Servant and Lord; and that too (as they ſpeak) *ad Idem*, or *ad Eundem, with reſpect to the ſame thing or to himſelf?*

But *Origen* yet more expreſly; *we call the Son, the ſecond God.* Cont. Celſ. l. 5. p. 258. And again, *the firſt God* (or the Father) *worketh not; no nor properly ſpeaking doth the* (Son or) *ſecond God.* Cont. Celſ. l. 6. p. 318. Shall not *a firſt* and a *ſecond God* be allowed to be two Gods; could this Father more plainly declare his Tritheiſm?

I grant, that *Origen* and all the Ante-Nicens, were ſuch Realiſts, as held *the Inequality* of the three Divine Perſons; but ſtill they believed them to be ſo many Gods. *Origen* was ſo much of Opinion, that the Son is inferiour to the Father; that (with *Arius*) he will not allow him to be *truly Co eternal*, but only the *oldeſt of the Creatures*, πρεσβύτατος (ſaith he, *contr. Celſ.* l. 5. p. 257.) τῶν δημιουργημάτων. And he is ſo far from thinking that the Son is *Almighty*; that he every where denies that he may be Prayed to: except only as to a Mediator, *who* (ſaith he) is to Pray *with* us, and *for* us. *Origen*'s firſt and 2*d* Books concerning Prayer, have ſo many Arguments directed againſt Praying to any but the Father; and particularly that we ſhould not Pray to the Son, he calls them *Fools* that do: that it well appears indeed, he held Father and Son to be *ſubſiſting Perſons*, as the Realiſts do; and that he durſt ſay, there are two Gods, a *firſt* and a *ſecond* God; but yet that in Truth, the Supream Divinity (or *true Divinity*) is in the Father only. Which alſo is the Opinion of all the Ante-Nicens, and was the Doctrine that *Arius* (afterwards) maintained: with whom, thoſe Modern Realiſts who hold the Inequality, do (almoſt) wholly ſymbolize; it may be ſaid, that moſt of thoſe who hold the Inequality of the ſuppoſed three Divine (ſubſiſting) Perſons, perfectly agree with the *Ariani molles*, *the moderate Arians.*

But here comes one, that will make all the World to know the inmoſt thoughts of the Realiſts; he perfectly (and in terms) diſcovers their Secret. 'Tis St. *Baſil*, called by his Party of Realiſts (*who hold the Inequality*) Baſilius Magnus, *Baſil the Great.* "To thoſe, (*ſaith this* "*bold Man*) who accuſe us, as hold- "ing three Gods; we anſwer: "*God is not one, in Number*, but "only in Nature. He means, as the Nature of Man, namely, the common Humanity, is one; but there are many *particular Men*, Peter, James, John, *&c.* So the Nature of God, or the common Divinity is one; but there are as truly more Gods in number, or more *particular*

lar Gods, as there are more particular Men; Father, Son and Spirit are each of them as truly a God, as *Peter*, *James* and *John*, are each of them a particular Man. This famous Paſſage is to be found in *Baſil*'s 141*ſt* Epiſtle, *ad Cæſarienſes*. Again (*Adv. Eunom.*) "In the Number "and in the Properties, there is a "Diverſity or Multiplicity; in the "Properties by which each Divine "Perſon is characteriz'd, we believe "a Diverſity; and *an Unity, only* "*in what makes the Deity*. i. e. In the Divine Attributes, that are common to all the three Divine Perſons: for each Perſon has Omniſcience, Omnipotence, and Omnipreſence, perfect Goodneſs; which Attributes make the Deity, as *Rationality* and *Riſibility* make the Humanity. *Baſil* then held; that to this Queſtion, *how many Gods*, it muſt be anſwered: *three Gods in Number*, or *three Perſonal Gods*, and one in Nature or Divine Properties. Which is to ſay; in very Deed, *three Gods*: but yet *Gods ſo reſembling one another*, that from *the ſameneſs* of their Attributes or *Eſſential* (not Perſonal) *Properties*, they may be called one God; even as *all Men*, or Mankind from *the ſameneſs* of their Nature, namely, the Rational, are in common ſpeech often times called *Man*. Which Compariſon, or Explication of their Meaning and Doctrine, is often uſed by St. *Baſil*, and St. *Gregory Nyſſen*; the Patriarchs and Founders of thoſe Realiſts, who affirm the Equality of the (ſuppoſed) Divine *ſubſiſting* Perſons.

As for the *Modern* Realiſts, they are only ſome late Writers of our own Nation; the firſt and chief is Dr. *Cudworth*, after him followed Dr. *Bull*: then Dr. *Sherlock*, my Lord the Biſhop of *Gloceſter*, Mr. *How*, Mr. *Milbourn*, Mr. *J. B.* in his late (Learned and Bitter) Anſwer to Dr. *S--th*. Some of theſe are for the abſolute Equality of the Divine Perſons, in all *Eſſential* Attributes; ſuch as Power, Wiſdom, Omnipreſence: but ſome, as Dr. *Cudworth* eſpecially, will allow the Son and Spirit to be equal in nothing to the Father, but only that they are Coeternal; and by *this*, he thinks, he ſufficiently acquits himſelf of Arianiſm. But both Parties moſt openly avow their Tritheiſm; and that many ways. By ſaying; there are three infinite *Spirits*, three Omniſcient *Minds*, three Divine intellectual *Subſtances*; three Divine Perſons *as really Subſiſting*, and as truly Diſtinct and divers, as three Angels or three Men are. Again, by their Explication of the Poſſibility, and the Manner, of an Unity in Trinity. Some of them ſaying; three *ſubſiſting* Divine Perſons are one God, by a certain moſt cloſe Unition of their Subſtances: Others, by mutual Conſciouſneſs, of one another's Thoughts and Actions; or becauſe, beſides their having *like Subſtances and Properties*, they are alſo *in* one another. They ſee not, what ſtrange marvellous Men of their Senſe ſhould not ſee; that ſeveral *ſubſiſting Per-*

ſons each of which is a perfect God, three Almighties, three Omniſcients, whether *Conſcious*, or *not Conſcious* to one another, whether *in* or *out of* one another, whether *agreeing* or at *odds*, none of theſe Foreign Conſiderations can *ſo alter* the Caſe, but that all Three muſt as truly be three perfect Gods, as each of them (is confeſſed) to be one perfect God.

But let us hear Mr. *J. B.* in his late Anſwer to Dr. *S--th's* Animadverſions on Dr. *Sherlock*. For as this Gentleman is well skilled in theſe Queſtions; ſo he delivers his Mind without much Reſerve: he ſeems not to be afraid, to ſay what he thinks; becauſe 'tis ſo certain, that the Fathers (after the Year 380.) were in the very ſame Sentiments concerning the Trinity; namely, that the Perſons of the Trinity are really diſtinct and *ſubſiſting Perſons*, and equally have all Divine Perfections, in the higheſt Degree. He ſaith, *pag.* 141. "Each *diſtinct* Di-" vine Perſon, is as compleatly and " perfectly God; as each *diſtinct* " Angelical Perſon is a compleat " perfect Angel. He demands at *pag.* 75. " Will the Animadverter " (Dr. *S--th*) deny; that one Di-" vine Perſon is one God? I will anſwer for Dr. *S--th*. 'Tis *Hereſy*, to ſay; that the Perſons of the Trinity are as diſtinct, as three Angelical Perſons: for Angels or Angelical Perſons are diſtinguiſhed in their Subſtances, and have ſo many ſeveral Underſtandings, Wills and Energies; but in all theſe Reſpects, the Perſons of the Trinity are not diſtinct, but are (Identically) the ſame. Nor is one Perſon of the Trinity *as compleatly and perfectly God*; as an Angelical Perſon is compleatly and perfectly an Angel: for one Angelical Perſon is a compleat and perfect Angel; but all three Perſons of the Trinity, and not one only, are neceſſary to compleat the Notion and due Conception of one God. Therefore to his Queſtion, Is not one Divine Perſon one God? I anſwer, no; three Divine Perſons are one God: that is to ſay, taking the word *Perſons* in the Senſe that the Church intends it, namely, for *Relative Perſons*, or the threefold Relation of the Deity. But taking a Divine Perſon, as this Author and his Fellow-Realiſts do, for a *ſubſiſting Perſon*, a diſtinct intellectual Being, and Infinite Mind and Spirit; I anſwer, and the Church alſo ſo anſwers: that indeed every ſuch Perſon is one God, and three ſuch are three Gods.

Page 85. "When God is ſaid to " be three Perſons, the term God is " taken in a Logical Senſe; and is " equivalent to a *terminus Communis*, or a *Species*. As who ſhould ſay; there are truly three Gods, in a proper, phyſical, and natural Senſe of the word *God*: for the words *God* and *Man* are *ſpecifical* Terms; the *former* implies divers (perſonal) Gods, as the *other* implies many (perſonal and individual) Men. He is ſo far from being aſhamed of all this; that he adds again,

Pag. 85.

Page 85. "The Fathers of the "Nicene Council, nay the whole "Eaſtern Church did appropriate "the title *one God* to the Father; "and *God of God* to the Son. The Fathers meant thereby, the Son is God (not of or from himſelf, but) *from*, or *by*, or *of* the Father. See what uſe Mr. *J. B.* makes of this, at *pag.* 91. "The Phraſe *God of* "*God* does neceſſarily imply a Mul- "tiplication of the term *God*, in "ſome Senſe or other. And one "and the ſame numerical *God* (*in* "*concreto*) can never be *God of* "*God* and *not God of God:* theſe "two cannot be verified of the "ſame *Subject*; of *one and the* "*ſame God*, *in concreto*, or *in Per-* "*ſon*. 'Tis Hereſy *in excelſis*; and the laſt words *in Perſon*, deſigned only *to blind* his true meaning, or *to mollifie* it to thoſe that happen to underſtand him, do but increaſe the groſſneſs of his Tritheiſm. He hath ſaid (in thoſe words) in effect; the Nicene Creed, and Oriental Church acknowledging one who is *God of God*, this God (who is God *of*, or *from* God) cannot be the ſame God with him *from* or *of* whom he is God, namely, with God the Father: theſe two muſt be *ſeveral Subjects*, *different Gods*. This avowed Tritheiſm, I ſay, is neither hid nor ſoftned by adding; *different Gods*, *in concreto*, *or in Perſon:* for it was never ſaid (or ſo much as thought) before, that the multiplication of Perſons in the Godhead, or theſe expreſſions, *God the Father*, *God the Son*, *God the H. Spirit*, would warrant any one to ſay *ſeveral Gods*, or that *God of God* is not the ſame both Subject and God, with *God the Father* and *God the Holy Spirit*. In ſhort, that which this Author and his Party of Realiſts intend, and ſay, (though ſomewhat Covertly and Artificially) is; that as all the Men in the World, *in concreto*, are notwithſtanding ſometimes expreſſed by the general *abſtract* word *Man:* So the three Gods, *in concreto*, three Perſonal (really ſubſiſting) Gods may alſo be expreſſed; but they care not how ſeldom, the ſeldomer the better, by that (ſcurvy, Socinian) *abſtract* word *God*.

I have not made theſe (ſhort) remarks on Mr. *J. B.* with a malevotent Intention; to create Envy, or to raiſe up Enemies, to him: I ſhall confeſs, that as broadly as he has ſpoke; St. *Baſil*, *Gregory Nyſſen*, and other Fathers (after the Year 380) ſo Taught, and ſo Spoke; and I have before given ſome inſtances of it; as I ſhall give more, in the Continuation of my Anſwer to Dr. *Bull*'s *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, and *Judgment of the Catholick Church*. But all that I deſign, is only; to appeal to the World, whether *the Realiſts* have not notoriouſly owned and profeſſed their Tritheiſm, with which they are charged, not only by the Socinians, but by the Nominals; which is to ſay, by the Church. Dr. *S--th* is but one Man, he is only a private Doctor; but he has rightly underſtood the Doctrine of the Church: if a

General

General Council were again to aſſemble, they would certainly eſpouſe his two Books; he hath ſaid neither more, nor leſs, nor otherwiſe, than the Catholick Church (ſince the Council of *Lateran*) has conſtantly taught. Mr. *J. B.* is a Learned and very diſcerning Perſon, ſo are other *Realiſts* of this Nation (I muſt not ſay, of *the Engliſh*, or of *the Catholick* Church, for they are departed from both) who have lately written againſt the Socinians: but they have oppoſed to ours, ſuch an Explication of the words *God*, *Perſons*, *Trinity*; as Dr. *S--th* hath deſervedly called a Trinity of Gods; nor will they be ever able to wipe off the Imputation. Mr. *J. B.* muſt not think, he has anſwered Dr. *S--th*: he hath only, ſometimes miſtaken him; ſometimes miſreported, or perverted, his plain and obvious Meaning; or quarrelled with the Doctrine of the Schools, and of the *Lateran* Council, (which is to ſay, of the Catholick Church) to make room for the (exploded) Tritheiſm of St. *Baſil*, and ſome other Fathers.

The Doctrine of the Catholick Church, Mr. *J. B.* knows well, can be fetched only from *General Councils*; the Church is never underſtood to ſpeak, but by a General Council: particular Fathers are but only particular Doctors; they are not the Church, how many ſoever they are. Therefore I deſire Mr. *J. B.* to tell me, what Council ever uſed his Language; that one Divine Perſon is one God, as perfectly one God, as one Angelical Perſon is one perfect Angel? In what Council ſhall we find, that the word *God* is equivalent to *a Species*; which is to ſay, the *Divinity* no leſs than the *Humanity* (or the Manhood) comprehends ſeveral Individuals, of the ſame both Nature and Denomination: as there are many Men, *in concreto*, ſo there are divers Gods alſo, *in concreto*. Can he direct us to that Council, which teaches; that *God of God*, and *God not of God* (that is, Father and Son) are not the ſame God; or that the term *God* implies any Multiplication? Did ever any Council ſo far apoſtatize from Chriſtianity, as to deny; that there is *but one numerical God*: and call that Doctrine *the Faith of Jews, Mahometans, and Heathens?* But this is Mr. *J. B*'s Language, and the Doctrine of all the Realiſts; they all intend as he has ſaid: nor will any of them cenſure his Book, but applaud it as a great and extraordinary Performance. I do not regard the Impertinences of Mr. *Tho. Holdſworth* (of *North-Stoneham*, near *Southampton*) in his late *Impar Conatui*, which he hath oppoſed to Mr. *J. B.* This *Orlando* has vomited up his Crudities, on a Perſon too much above him to take notice of him; and all that I ſhall trouble my ſelf to ſay of him, is: that if, as he has been careful to tell us the Place of his Reſidence, and of his Vicinage, ſo he had alſo told us *his Age*; we might have gueſſed, with more certainty than now we well can, whether he *raves*, or *dotes*.

The

The Realiſts *ſpeak much more Myſtically, or Abſurdly, than the* Nominals.

I Muſt make another Remark on the Realiſts; namely: That the abſurd contradictory and impoſſible Things, partly expreſly ſaid by 'em, partly implied in their Doctrine, are far leſs tolerable or accountable; than the (forced) Improprieties, in the uſe of Words and Terms, by the Nominals, are.

I confeſs, both Parties ſo often depart, from the common uſe of Terms and Words; that one as well as the other is frequently forced, to the χρησφύγετον of *Myſtery:* when they cannot aſſoil the Difficulties, objected to themſelves by each other, or by the *Socinians* to both; when they find that the uſe of *Words*, and the nature of *Things*, are both againſt them, they cry Myſtery; their Doctrine then (they confeſs) though a Truth, is however a Myſtery, above the Capacity, whether of themſelves or of any others. But then, ſay I; the Realiſts would cover ſuch *flat* Impoſſibilities, ſuch *groſs* Contradictions to common Senſe, in a Word ſuch Monſtroſities, under the cloak of *Myſtery:* that they have infinitely more need of that (wretched) Blind, than the Nominals; who only *by explaining their Terms*, which Cuſtom and Law have impoſed on them, go a great way in fairly ſatisfying all Difficulties; and when they cannot perfectly account for them, they make ſome ſmall uſe of *Myſtery*. To underſtand this; we muſt take a ſhort view, of the (polite, happy) Things, ſaid by them both.

The Nominals teach, there is but one (numerical) God, or *one God in Number*; who yet is *three Perſons*. That the Father is God, the Son is God, the H. Ghoſt is God; yet all three are but one God, one God *in Number*, one *ſelf-ſame God*. They are perfectly aware, this were equally Impoſſible and Ridiculous; if 'twere not dextrouſly interpreted and explained: it would not be Myſtery, or *Myſterious Truth*, but *notorious Falſhood* and Abſurdity, they well know; if wholly left in theſe Terms, without an Explication. Therefore they declare, that by the term *Perſons*, and the words *Father*, *Son* and *Spirit*, they mean not (with the Vulgar) ſeveral *ſubſiſting Perſons*; that is to ſay, "So many in-"tellectual Subſtances, with each "his own particular Life, Under-"ſtanding, Will, and power of "Action; for they confeſs there is in God but one Subſtance, Life, Underſtanding, Will, Energy, *in number:* but three *Perſons* in God are ſo many *States*, or *Reſpects*, or *Properties*, or *Relations* (or ſomething equivalent to theſe) of the ſame or

Divine intellectual Subſtance or Nature. And in this Senſe alſo, according to the Nominals, the words Father, Son and Spirit (when uſed of God) are to be underſtood: namely, as *Relations* or *States*, all of them ſuſtained by one and the ſame *ſubſiſting Perſon*, or *intellectual Subſtance*; not as in ſo many Subjects, or as denominating variouſly three diſtinct Beings. They ſhow, that ſo the Claſſical Authors, both Greek and Latin, ſpoke: and as their Language was adopted by the Church, in ſpeaking of God, with great Propriety; ſo in proceſs of Time, the uſe of Words being much altered, occaſion was given to introduce the Hereſy of the Realiſts; who unlearnedly underſtanding the old Words, in a novel Senſe, have brought into the Church three Gods, inſtead of one.

Again, they (the Nominals) ſay, the ſecond Perſon of the Trinity (or of God) *was Incarnate* in the Man Chriſt Jeſus; in ſuch manner, that thereby the Lord Chriſt is *God* as well as *Man*. This alſo is called by that Myſtical Name, the Hypoſtatical (or perſonal) Union. But they mean no more by it, than this; that God was as much and truly united to the Humanity, as the Human Nature is capable of: that is to ſay, in a moſt extraordinary, marvellous, and (to us) unaccountable Manner.

When they ſay, O God the Father have Mercy on us; O God the Son, O God the Holy Ghoſt, have Mercy on us; they intend not hereby *three Objects of Worſhip*, or ſo many *ſeveral Patrons* and Helpers: but only as theſe are ſo many Relations and Reſpects of the Deity, either to himſelf or to us; ſo they invocate him by theſe Diſtinctions, or in theſe ſeveral Properties and Relations. In ſhort, the whole Myſtery conſiſts in the Terms they uſe; and ſcarce at all, if at all in the Senſe, or things intended by thoſe Terms: which things (or ſenſe) are received, and imbraced by us the Unitarians; for we admit the whole Doctrine, as here declared and explained.

But 'tis quite otherwiſe with the Realiſts; their Non-ſenſe is in *the thing* meant, not in *the Words* or Terms. They ſay, there are three Divine *ſubſiſting Perſons*, three infinite *Spirits*, three omniſcient *Minds*, three *diſtinct* Almighties, as diſtinct as ſo many Angels or Men; each of them as truly, properly, adequately, and perfectly God, as each Man is a Man, and each Angel an Angel: and yet all of them are but one God. This, we confeſs, is *Myſtery* with a Witneſs; the Myſtery (every one ſees) lies not in *the Words* and *Terms*, but *the thing* it ſelf is abſurd and impoſſible: to cry *Myſtery* here, is to profeſs; that by Myſtery, we mean *Contradiction*, and Impoſſibilities.

The Excuſes they make for this Myſtery, are as myſterious, or more myſterious than the Myſtery, for which they would apologize. For to ſay, theſe three (moſt perfect) Gods become one God, *by their mutual Accord and Love*, is; as if you ſhould pretend, that by Love and Accord, three

three *Men* are one *Man*. And when they ſay, they are one God by likeneſs or *ſameneſs of Nature and Properties*; and by being *in one another*: they might equally ſay, that two or more Angels, becauſe they have *the ſame Nature and Properties*, and being Spiritual, do immeate, or are *in one another*, are thereby one Angel. Theſe Explications of their Myſtery, are aſſuredly as great Myſteries, as direct Contradictions to Reaſon and common Experience; as the Doctrine it ſelf, of one God and three Divine *ſubſiſting* Perſons. But why do the Realiſts expect, that Mankind will be perſwaded to accept ſuch palpable abnegations of all conſiſtent Senſe, for *Myſtery*: words that are hardly Senſe, or of either ambiguous or obſcure meaning, may be put off (with ſome or other, who care not for the Trouble of conſidering) for Myſtery; but *groſs* Contradictions, *obvious* and *notorious* Non-ſenſe, will never be miſtaken for Myſtery. 'Tis true, People may be conſtrained to profeſs it, or to ſubſcribe to it; but they never believe it, no not when (through a long habit of Submiſſion to the Commands of others) they ſeem to themſelves to believe it. I doubt not, that the Doctors of the Church of *Rome*, ſeem to themſelves to believe the Tranſubſtantiation; becauſe having accuſtom'd themſelves to ſubmit to the Declarations of the Church, they have never ſuffered any reluctance to ariſe in their Minds, againſt any of thoſe Declarations: notwithſtanding, I am perſwaded, not a Man of them truly believes that Myſtery; were all Fears and Hopes, and other biaſſing Intereſts removed, they would preſently perceive, that in very Deed they believe it not; *their Reaſons never aſſented to an impoſſible Propoſition, nor could aſſent*; but only (as I ſaid) through a long habit of Submiſſion, *they did not diſcern*, that they aſſented not to the Church's Declarations. And this, I believe, is true alſo, of all who pretend, or ſeem to believe any other inconſiſtent, or impoſſible Doctrines.

The Tritheiſm of the Realiſts, *not grounded on the H. Scripture.*

BUT this once more; 'tis not on a probable or prudent Ground, that the Realiſts ſometimes pretend, that the Tritheiſm they impoſe has ſuch a Foundation in Holy Scripture: that as on the one ſide, to believe the Trinity in their Notion of it, is a violence done to Reaſon; ſo not to own and profeſs it, would oblige them to as great a Violence, and Diſobedience to Holy Scripture.

I confeſs, I have often wondred; that Men ſo Learned and Diſcerning, as very many of the Realiſts are, ſhould maintain ſuch an Opinion; and after having made ſuch Conceſſions to the Nominals, and to the Unitarians, as the Realiſts do. They

grant it, to be certain and inconteſtable, not only in Reaſon, but in Holy Scripture, that there is but one God, but one Creator; they allow this to be ſo true and evident, that the Scripture ought never to be ſo interpreted, as in any degree to contradict this firſt Article of all revealed Religion: becauſe to interpret Holy Scripture at any Time, or in any part of it, inconſiſtently with that Article, were to make it contradict it ſelf, and that too, where it ſpeaks moſt plainly and expreſly. I ſay, this Foundation being laid, and agreed on all Hands; I have often wondred at the pretence of the Realiſts: for their Doctrine being a manifeſt Tritheiſm, as explained by them; in ſaying 'tis what the Holy Scriptures teach, they ſay, that the Sacred Scriptures contradict themſelves. They would have it underſtood as a great deference, on their Parts, towards the Holy Scriptures; that they imbrace and profeſs the Doctrine therein contained, though ſuch Doctrine very flatly contradicts all Reaſon and common Senſe, and withal other parts of the ſame Scriptures: but it were far more becoming ſuch as they are, to expreſs their Reverence for the Scripture, by interpreting it conſiſtently with it ſelf, and with Reaſon, as the Nominals and Unitarians do; than to expoſe it to the contempt and unbelief of all others, by ſuch a Reverence of it as this Book needs not; that is to ſay, by pretending to believe it indeed, but believe it *as manifeſtly inconſiſtent with it ſelf*; as well as with that Reaſon which God has infuſed into the Human Nature, for a Guide and Judg, in all either obſcure or doubtful Matters. It is the Church and the Unitarians, that truly reverence the Scriptures; by reſcuing them from ſenſeleſs, and contradictory (which is to ſay, impoſſible) Senſes.

But ſuppoſing it were true, that the meer Words of ſome few (ſuſpected, or ambiguous) Texts, did ſeem very much to favour the Doctrine of the Realiſts; yet ſeeing thoſe Texts (as interpreted by the Realiſts) too plainly contradict evident Reaſon, and the Nature of things: why will not theſe Gentlemen ſee, that in ſuch a Claſh as this, "We "*muſt* interpret the Scripture conſiſtently with Reaſon and the nature "of things; becauſe *words* will bear "to be ſomewhat ſtrained, much "rather than *things?* The nature of Things, and the dictates of Reaſon, are Eternal and Immutable; they will not admit, or bear the leaſt Stretch, Strain, or Violence done to them: but Words are of a very deſultory and vagrant Meaning; they are ſometimes to be taken Literally, or *as they Sound*, ſometimes in a metaphorical or *figurative Senſe*; ſometimes in an Hyperbolical, that is *exceſſive*; nay, ſometimes in an Ironical (which is to ſay, *contrary*) Senſe: which being the Caſe of all Books and Writings whatſoever, there can never be a real Neceſſity of ſo interpreting the Scripture, that it ſhould contradict the *known* Nature of things, *plain* Reaſon, or it ſelf.

Whereas ſome ſay here, and are willing

willing always to repeat it; that *the current* of Scripture is ſo much, and ſo clearly, for ſuch a Trinity as the Realiſts profeſs: that it would be manifeſt Violence, done to the Divine Word, to interpret it as the Socinians do. I anſwer, *Cedò locum, name me the Text*, or Context, alledged for the Doctrine of the Trinity; that is not interpreted by ſome of the moſt Learned Criticks and Interpreters of the Trinitarian Party, in the ſame manner as 'tis underſtood by the Unitarians. Why do they pretend, that they are *conſtrained*, and by *the clearneſs*, and *the current* of Scripture; to profeſs a Trinity of Divine (*ſubſiſting*) Perſons: when all Learned Men know, that the Texts they have to alledg, are ſo far from being *the current* of Scripture, that they are *few in Number*, and alſo of *very ſuſpected Authority*, that is, they are juſtly doubted of, whether they are genuine original Parts of Scripture, or have been added to it; and *ſo far from being clear*, that they are *extreamly Ambiguous*, and accordingly not only ſome, but even the generality of Trinitarian Criticks interpret *moſt* of them, as *we* do; and not only moſt of them, but the Principal of them, more particularly the (objected) Texts that ſeem to impute the Creation of Things to our Saviour. As I ſaid but now, *Cedò locum, I demand that Text*, or Context, which I will not ſhow is interpreted by the moſt ſufficient of their own Party, as we take it: but if ſo, as 'tis not the firſt Time this Challenge has been made to them; why do they (ſo untruly) pretend, that they are carried away by the Current of Scripture, and by the clearneſs of it, both on their ſides? May they call a few ſingle Texts (or rather, ſhreds of Texts) the Current of Scripture: or talk of the clearneſs of their Texts; when they cannot alledg ſo much as one, but is interpreted to an Unitarian Senſe by ſome of their own (beſt) Writers, on the Scriptures, and of Controverſy?

With how much more Reaſon and Sincerity, may the Unitarians claim the current of Scripture; and that 'tis clear alſo, on their Side? For there is not a Page there, but ſpeaks of God *in the ſingular Number*; there God is never called *Perſons*, but *Perſon*: he is always ſpoken *of*, and *to*, by ſingular Pronouns, ſuch as *I*, *Thou*, *Thee*, *He*, *Him*, *Me*; which are never uſed in any Language, but only of one ſingle Perſon; never of three (*ſubſiſting*) Perſons.

When the Realiſts ſay, the Scriptures are *clear* of their ſide; they mean it chiefly of thoſe Texts, wherein Chriſt is called *God*: and of thoſe, in which the Creation of the World, and of all things, is (or ſeems to be) attributed to him. But how often is the name *God* given in Holy Scripture, to thoſe that either repreſent God, as Kings and Magiſtrates; or that are like to him in ſome very diſtinguiſhing Reſpect, or in whom he dwells after a peculiar manner, as Prophets, and Heroical Perſons: is not *Moſes* (for

one Inſtance) on all theſe accounts called *God*, and by God himſelf? And is it a Marvel then, that the Mediator alſo of the New Teſtament, as well as he of the Old, is dignified with this Name? And yet (as I have ſaid elſewhere) I am well aſſured, that the Realiſts will never prove, againſt the Author of the Brief Hiſtory of the Socinians; that the name *God* is really given to the Lord Chriſt, in any Text that is a genuine Part of Scripture: that is to ſay, that hath not been corrupted by the Zeal of Catholicks, to make it more conformable to their Sentiments. As to the Texts, that impute the Creation of things, to the Son; that is, to the Lord Chriſt: do not all Learned Men know, that the beſt of the Trinitarian Interpreters, ſome of the zealouſeſt Men of the Party, underſtand *all* thoſe Texts of *the New Creation*; that is, of the Renovation of things *on Earth*, by the Miniſtry of Chriſt; and *in Heaven*, by his Exaltation above the Angels? And ſecondly, That neither is there any need of *this*; for thoſe Texts may be thus tranſlated: all things were made *for* him; and *without regard to him, was nothing made that was made.* Were made *for him*; that is to ſay, they were originally made by God, *for the Meſſiah:* namely, to ſubject them (in fulneſs of Time) to *him*, and to *his* Law. Which is the Interpretation of St. *John Chryſoſtom*, a moſt Learned Trinitarian, in the *Opus Imperfectum*, on St. *Matthew.*

In ſhort, I would not have it ſaid; that *the current* of Scripture *is*, much leſs is *clearly*, on their ſide, who contend for a Trinity of Divine (*ſubſiſting*) Perſons: becauſe 'tis ſo well known, that this (ſenſeleſs, extravagant) boaſt of ſome ſmall Writers of Controverſy, is the Jeſt and Sport of their own Criticks and Interpreters of Note; who have far more ſcorn for ſuch Scioliſts, than they have Enmity to the Socinians.

Of the Unitarians; *their Agreement with the Church.*

THE Unitarians, called alſo Socinians, are a Sect or Party, or Denomination of Chriſtians, who have indeavoured to perfect that Reformation; that was ſo happily begun by Dr. *M. Luther*, Mr. *J. Calvin*, and here (in *England*) by Archbiſhop *Cranmer.*

Dr. *Luther* ſubverted the Infallibility, and Supremacy of the Pope; the Worſhip and Invocation of Angels, and Saints; the (ſuperſtitious) monaſtick Vows; the Merchandize of Indulgencies, by which poor Sinners had been long cozen'd into a Belief, that they could buy the Pardon of their Sins, from the Pope and his Factors: and this not only without Reſtitution, Amendment, or Repentance, but *without Confeſſion*;

Confeſſion; for that alſo was ſometimes a Clauſe in their Bulls of Indulgence, that the Purchaſer ſhould be abſolved of *all his Sins, whether Confeſſed or not Confeſſed.* The forms of Indulgences were ſo ample, that is, ſo General and Comprehenſive; that Men of any Wealth never cared, what Sins they were guilty of: becauſe they knew they could at any time, whether Dead or Alive, purchaſe their Pardon; if they had neglected it in their Life Time, 'twas but leaving ſo much Money by Will, for Maſſes and Indulgences, and they were ſure all ſhould be forgiven. The Story of the French Gentleman is well known; who being admoniſhed by his Friend, of his horrible Curſing and Blaſpheming; anſwered: "Man, there is "no fear, cannot I buy my Pardon "of the Friars Auſtins? I would "be forgiven for an Ounce of "Gold, though I had raviſh'd the "Mother of God, and cut off "both her Breaſts. This was the ſtate of Things, when Dr. *Luther* appeared, and oppoſed himſelf (ſo ſucceſsfully) to theſe Corruptions; as I ſaid, he intirely ruin'd the Market of Indulgences, Monaſtick Vows, Invocation of Saints and Angels, the Supremacy and Infallibility of the Chair of *Rome.*

Mr. *J. Calvin*, beſides that he greatly ſtrengthned, and confirmed what Dr. *Luther* had begun; by his extraordinary Erudition, fine Wit, and indefatigable Diligence, in all which Mr. *Calvin* excelled the very greateſt of the firſt Reformers: he carried the Reformation ſomewhat farther, than *Luther* had done. He took away *the uſe* of Images, which can ſerve only for *a ſnare* to the Weak; and for *an Avocation*, and *Amuſement*, to the Diſcerning. His Doctrine concerning the Sacraments, has fewer Follies than, not only that of *Rome*, but, than *Luthers*; he rejected the Conſubſtantiation, as well as the Tranſubſtantiation, and was not impoſed on by the Doctrine of Ubiquity. I need ſay nothing of Arch-biſhop *Cranmer*; becauſe his Reformation is known to every Engliſhman: his Doctrine and Diſcipline being expreſſed in the 39 Articles, the Books of Homilies, of Canons, and the Common-Prayer.

All Proteſtants have a great Reverence, for theſe famous and excellent Men; even thoſe of us, who think, that their Reformation is yet very incompleat. I may add, that as much as theſe Reformers are deteſted, by the Papiſts; the very Papiſts, all Orders of them (from the higheſt to the loweſt; from the Pope, to the Begging, and diſcalceate Friar) are greatly in their Debt. For now they have Learned Prieſts, Holy Popes; and the Kings and States of the Roman Communion, are no longer the Slaves of the Pope: all which was otherways, when there were no Proteſtants, of whom the Pope and Conclave and (the reſt of their) Hierarchy might ſtand in ſome awe. The Popes conſider now; that they muſt act Soberly, live Exemplarily, and inſpect the Conduct

and

and Sufficiency of the Clergy; elſe the Princes and People, now in their Communion, will deſert to the Proteſtants.

It was Dr. *Luther*, as odious as his Name among them is; who took off the Yoke, and filed the Chains, from the Necks and Hands of Emperours, of Kings and Nations. From laying proſtrate, under the Feet of the Pope; from holding his Bridle, and his Stirrup; from expecting (after their Election by the Princes of the Empire) till the Pope ſhould pleaſe to crown them, and thereby give them the Name and Power of Emperours; from Trembling, every time that a (crouching) Friar was turned, into a (boiſterous) Pope: I ſay, from this miſerable Vaſſalage, the German Emperors, and other Catholick Kings and States, are delivered; and care now, juſt ſo much, and no more, for his *Holineſs*'s Love or Anger; as the Example of his Life, or the actual Aſſiſtance he can lend to 'em, ſhall merit. Since *Luther*, *the Clergy* (alſo) of the Roman Communion, are Learned and exemplary Men; in their own Defence, and for their own Security, they *muſt be ſo.* And they dare *now*, withſtand any new Incroachments on their Privileges, or their Revenues, by the Court of *Rome.* Nay, they have retrieved, in ſome Degree, their antient Rights and Authority: for *Rome* dreads (and ever will dread) another *Luther*; in caſe ſhe ſhould (unjuſtly, or raſhly) either oppreſs, or offend the inferior Clergy. Thoſe of *the Lay-Communion* of that Church, are *now* led with *a Paſtoral-Staff*; not hared with the Church's Thunder, *Excommunications* and *deliverings up to Satan.* They are ſent of no more Errands to *Syria* and *Aſia*; in pretence, to reſcue the Holy Sepulchre; in Deed, to inlarge the Papal Bounds, and Authority. They are fed now with much ſounder Doctrine; and led, by a better Example. For now the neceſſity of Repentance, and Amendment, are taught; Indulgences are now owned, to be only Prudential and Charitable relaxations of Penance; Images are now uſed, only as Memorials of departed Saints, and Incentives to imitate their Example; the Sacrifice of the Maſs is now only *a commemorative Sacrifice*, which even Proteſtants believe it to be; the *Virgin Mary* and the Saints are prayed to, only to pray *with* us, and *for* us: and the like abatement is made, in other Articles. And whereas with reference to *the Example* of their Prieſts, it has been a Proverb in ſome Places; "He that will give his "Child to the Devil, let him make "him a Prieſt: now, and for almoſt two Ages laſt paſt; their danger from the Proteſtants, as was ſaid before, has reformed their Manners.

Theſe are the Services, done by the firſt Reformers; as well to the Papiſts themſelves, as to us of the Reformation: their Memory is glorious, and ought to be precious alſo, among us. But we ſay alſo; that the Augéan Stable was too foul, to be abſolutely cleanſed at once, even by *Hercules*

Hercules and his Companions: Dr. *Luther* did a great deal, the Labours of his Companions and Seconds were very laudable; but much Filth is ſtill left behind. We deſire to be (fairly and candidly) heard, concerning ſome corruptions in the Faith; and ſome abuſes in the Morality, ſtill taught: and particularly, which is the Subject of theſe preſent Papers, concerning the Object of our Faith and Worſhip, Almighty GOD.

We ſee, we own; that the Doctrine of *the Church*, meaning by the Church *the Nominal Trinitarians*, is ſound, as to the *Senſe and Intention of it*: but we (humbly) offer, that *the Terms* in which 'tis expreſſed, are *Unſcriptural*, and *very Dangerous*. The words *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Hypoſtatical Union*, are never uſed in Scripture; nor is God ever there called *Perſons*, but *Perſon*. And 'tis evident, that by occaſion of theſe Terms; the Vulgar have ſuch a conception of the Trinity, as is *certain Tritheiſm*. When the People hear of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt; they know not, that thereby are meant only ſo many *Relations* of God, either *internal* Relations to himſelf, or *external* Relations to the Creature: but they conceive in their Minds, ſuch a Father, Son and Spirit diſtinct from both, as are ſo many ſeveral ſubſiſting Spirits, ſo many diſtinct All-perfect Beings; in very Deed ſo many *Living Gods*, and not *one God under three ſeveral Conceptions*. For tho they are taught to ſay, three Divine Perſons and *but one God*; and that God the Father, God his Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, tho each of them is God, yet *all of them are but one God*: this laſt *all of them but one God*, becauſe they know not how 'tis to be conceived with the other (namely, that each of them is God; and *one* of them is God the Father, *another* God the Son;) they utterly loſe the Conception of *one God*, and retain only what is intelligible to them, namely, *three Divine Perſons*, *each of them a God*.

We think, that the Church having gained her Point, againſt the Fathers and Realiſts, in the *Lateran* Council; and having been in Poſſeſſion of the Truth, for near 500 Years together: ſhe may now fling off the Diſguiſe hitherto uſed, the dangerous Tritheiſtick terms, *Trinity*, *Perſons*, and the reſt; ſhe may now begin to declare the Truth ſhe owns, in Terms and Words that are proper for it. Why does ſhe frown upon thoſe, nay, perſecute them, that believe the Unity of God in the Senſe that ſhe holds it; only becauſe they would caſt out the Terms that ſo plainly favour the Tritheiſts, that is, *the Realiſts?* What has the Church to fear; has not the *Lateran* Council, and all Writers ever ſince, declared the Realiſts to be Hereticks: therefore what need is there to retain their *Terms*, when we have diſcharged *the Notions* intended by them?

'Tis true, we can ſay as the Church does, three Divine Perſons; the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghoſt is God; taking theſe words in the Church's Senſe, not for *ſubſiſting Perſons*, that is to ſay, *Living Spirits*,

Spirits, but for Relations, Properties, Modes, or such like. We can say, *God was Incarnate*; meaning he did inhabit the Lord Christ, after an ineffable manner, and without Measure: which is really as much as the Church intends by the word Incarnation. We own the (eternal) Generation of the Son or *Word*, and Procession of the Spirit, by and from the Father; explaining our selves, with the School-Divines, the Church, and divers Fathers, thus: that God or the Father, or original Wisdom, conceived a most perfect Image of himself, *by understanding*, and considering his own Perfections; and that he *loveth* (or willeth) as well as understandeth himself. We can even say, three Divine *subsisting Persons*; intending with Dr. *S--th*, the Schools, the *Lateran* Council, and the Church, *Relative Subsistences, whose Subsistence is nothing else but their Relation.* Which are Dr. *S--th*'s express words, *Tritheism charged*, p. 156.

I cannot but ask it again; why does the Church *keep*, or impose on *us*, such Words and Terms; as in their *present Signification*, destroy the Faith we both imbrace; the Faith of *the real Unity of God?* We can say as the Church says, we can use her *Terms*; because we know her meaning: but we cannot but say of them, as Mr. *Calvin* did (when ask'd his Opinion) of the English Common-Prayers, *Tolerabiles Ineptiæ.* For in very Deed, 'tis meer Trifling, and something worse; when the signification of these Terms and Words is wholly altered, from what it antiently was, yet still to retain them: while the Church knows at the same Time, that they give wrong Notions to the Vulgar, making all our People Tritheists; and serve also to animate, and harden the Realists in their Heresy.

But I must do the Church this right, to confess; that most of her greatest Men, particularly the first Reformers, have publish'd to all the World their hearty desire, that all these terms of the Realists were abolish'd; and all were obliged to use the Scripture-Language and Words only: which would heal all our Breaches, and perfectly restore our Peace; not only in this, but in (almost) all other Questions and Strifes. Let us hear, of so many as might be alledged, Dr. *M. Luther*, and Mr. *J. Calvin*.

M. Luther complains; 'The word '*Trinity* sounds odly: it were better to 'call Almighty God, *God*; than *Tri*-'*nity*. Postil. major. Dominic.

Mr. *Calvin* is yet less pleased, with these kind of Terms; he says, 'I like 'not this Prayer, *O Holy Blessed* '*and Glorious Trinity*. It savours of 'Barbarity;—the word *Trinity* is bar-'barous, insipid, profane, an human 'Invention, grounded on no Testi-'mony of God's Word, the Popish 'God, unknown to the Prophets and 'Apostles. *Admon.* 1. *ad Polon.*

Decemb. 17. 1695.

FINIS.